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Romanism always the same

GERMANY.

Morning Post June 7 1895

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.

BERLIN, JUNE 6.

The President of the Berlin Police, Baron n Richthofen, whose somewhat sudden death the hospital of Bonn University took place morning, was a very important personage the life of the capital of a country which is en designated the "Police State." Von chthofen was appointed chief of the Berlin lice in 1885, and his tenure of office covered last five years of the Socialist law which ced Berlin in a state of minor siege. On ron von Richthofen also fell the heavy k of ordaining and executing all arrange- nts for maintaining public order at ceremonies e the burial of the Emperor William I. and on numerous occasions of public interest which lowed. The stringency with which the police ulations were carried out on these occa- ns did not tend to make the late Pre- ent a popular figure with the Berlin blic, while the Press could not easily forget sentences passed on Berlin journalists two ars ago at his instance for criticising in adverse ns the action of the police in plain clothes who acked, when it was leaving the place of meet- , a peaceful assembly of the unemployed, and be- oured inoffensive individuals with indiarubber - preservers. The question of Baron von chthofen's successor naturally excites the greatest erest at a time when the Minister of the Interior Herr von Köller who has shown an unmistak- le tendency to strain to the utmost the police wers which attach to his office. Should Herr n Köller be able to secure the appointment of a esident of Police after his own kind Berlin would evitably acquire a similar character to that of St. tersburg or Moscow in regard to the liberty of e citizens.

A great sensation is being caused throughout rmany by the revelations made in a trial now oceeding at Aix-la-Chapelle, in which Herr ellage is being prosecuted for libelling the monks the monastery of Mariaberg, a kind of oman Catholic lunatic asylum. Mellage had blished a *brochure* in which he gave an account the treatment in the monastery of an Inverness iest named Forbes, who had entered it some ars ago as a patient, believing it to be a kind of natorium. Forbes was incarcerated for over ree years in the monastery, and only escaped Mellage's help. The treatment of other tients seems to have been even worse than that Forbes. The lay brothers who admin- tered the hospital were rough and illiterate rsons, who inflicted cruel personal chastise- ent on the inmates and subjected them dangerous immersions, head first, in ice- ld water. There was also a cell full of th in which recalcitrant patients were ufined. The food was inadequate and uneatable. -day's evidence was chiefly that of specialists, Dr. Gerlach of Münster, and Professor Finkelburg of Bonn, who agreed that the institution had not been conducted in accordance with the terms of the law, that certificates of the insanity of patients were in many cases irregular and unsatisfactory and that there had been no adequate medical control. Their opinion regarding Forbes himself was that he was suffering from excessive drinking and alcoholic poisoning, but that neither the statements received from Scotland nor his present condition would have justified them in certifying him to be insane. Other witnesses formerly connected with Mariaberg reported cases in which the death of patients appeared to them to be directly traceable to personal violence suffered at the hands of the monks.

GERMANY.

Morning Post June 8. 1895

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT.

BERLIN, JUNE 7.

The German Colonial Society has been holding its annual session at Cassel during the present week under the presidency of the Duke Johann Albrecht of Mecklenburg. Major von Wissmann, Dr. Peters, Herr von Bennigsen, and a large number of members of the Colonial Council were present. The proceedings would not be worth recording but for the following extraordinary resolution, which was moved by Count Frankenberg and unanimously adopted by the Society: — "The movements and declarations friendly to Germany of the Government and population of the Transvaal awaken a warm response in this country. The Colonial Society considers itself called upon to give expression to these responsive feelings, as it is in the interest of the Colonial policy of the German Empire that such movements should be crowned with success. This Assembly, therefore, requests its President to express to the Imperial Chancellor its full approval of all measures which are fitted to promote friendly relations with the people of the Transvaal, and to strengthen their independence." It is, perhaps, desirable to mention that the German Colonial Society in no wise represents the German nation, and that it has not a shadow of right to speak for them. It is only a caucus of Colonial agitators, but it unfortunately furnishes all the public opinion that the Government has to appeal to in support of its Colonial policy, and from the time when the Society sent out Dr. Peters to make private annexations on the Zanzibar mainland it has dictated the policy of the Government, and is at present inciting the German Foreign Office to meddle where it has not the slightest pretence of an excuse for saying anything. It is very unfortunate that Englishmen, who are so eager to champion the rights of others, are always oblivious till the eleventh hour of intrigues directed against their own.

The revelations regarding the barbarous treatment

of the inmates of the monastery of Mariaberg, now being made in the course of the trial for libel at Aix-la-Chapelle, continue to excite public indignation throughout the German Empire. Professor Finkelnburg, a specialist, said to-day in the course of his evidence that he had come into Court with sceptical feelings regarding the charges made against the monastery, but after what had been testified by the monks themselves, he could not find an adequate form of words to express his condemnation of the state of affairs existing in the institution. The treatment of lunatics and alleged lunatics and the punishments inflicted upon them were such as he could not have believed to be possible in a modern State. The main blame rested on the State authorities, whose periodical inspections had been most superficial and inadequate. Grave blame also attached to the doctors of the institution, although it might be said in excuse that they were too few in number to exercise any supervision. Dr. Besser and Dr. Gerlach, also specialists, agreed with this statement. Chains and other instruments of torture which had been applied to patients were produced in Court. The monks of the monastery were described as illiterate working-men, who had not had any previous training to fit them for subordinate positions in an asylum or hospital, and yet these monks had the sole control of patients—educated and, in some cases, gifted persons—who were shut up in the monastery in a most irregular manner without proper doctors' certificates. With regard to the Inverness priest Forbes, whose case gave rise to the whole scandal, both Professor Finkelnburg and Dr. Gerlach described him as intelligent, educated, and mentally and physically healthy, though Professor Finkelnburg considered that he was addicted to intemperance. Dr. Gerlach, however, from personal observation undertaken at the instance of the Court, doubted the accuracy of the charge of intemperance. Both agreed that unless Forbes had been rescued by Mellage from the monastery the treatment to which he was being subjected must have led to his becoming insane. Forbes himself had entered the monastery as a patient at the instance of Bishop Macdonald, of Aberdeen, and made no attempt to escape, as he considered that his Bishop had a right to determine his place of residence, though not to deprive him of his personal liberty. At the close of to-day's proceedings a great crowd made a noisy demonstration before the Court-house, and had to be dispersed by mounted police.

The *National Zeitung* publishes a strong article on the yielding attitude of the German Government towards the Roman Catholic Church, and says it would never have tolerated in any public or private institution such a condition of things as that at Mariaberg. Political exigencies in the Reichstag have, it is added, prevented the Government from doing its duty. The era of toleration of such abuses must end, and in the present case a large number of prosecutions against offenders must be instituted.

[REUTER'S TELEGRAM.]

BERLIN, JUNE 7.

The *Berliner Correspondenz* announces that the legal proceedings which have been instituted in connection with the Alexian Monastery of Maria-

MEMORIALS OF THE ENGLISH MARTYRS.

JOHN FOXE, THE MARTYROLOGIST.

Dr Orlando. A. Jones,
with the affectionate regards
of the author.

MEMORIALS

OF THE

ENGLISH MARTYRS.

Charles Benjamin

BY THE REV. C. B. TAYLER, M.A.

NEW AND REVISED EDITION.

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"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—
Rev. ii. 10.

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PREFACE.

IN former ages, it was a common custom to go on pilgrimage to places hallowed by the associations connected with them, where wonders had been wrought, where men had lived in high repute for sanctity, or died as victims to unjust and cruel persecutions. Such places are still to be found, and are visited to this day. To many of them legends, at once fabulous and absurd, are attached: and those who visit them are commonly led to do so in the blindness of an ill-directed faith, and the credulity of a dark superstition.

I call upon my reader to accompany me upon a pilgrimage of a very different character. I have determined to go, as it were, on pilgrimage to places where martyrs to the truth as it is in Jesus, have left the record of their sufferings or of their death. I desire to interest my readers in the history of holy men who, in times of terror and persecution, have loved

truth better than life, and have been enabled in that Divine strength which is made perfect in weakness, willingly and cheerfully, to lay down their lives for His sake who loved them, and gave Himself for them. We will seek out, and visit together spots which, in these days of error, must not, and shall not be forgotten!

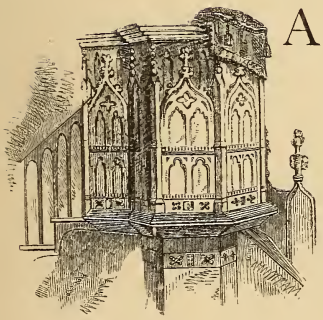
I am aware, that by recalling the attention of the public to the persecutions of Popery, I expose myself to the accusation that I am as one that stirreth up strife, and I may be told that it would be better to let such mournful events lie hidden beneath the cloud of oblivion, which has, in many places, gathered over them. God knows (I say it with reverence), that I have no wish to stir up strife; but I feel that every one, who would obey that inspired command, "Earnestly contend for the faith, once delivered to the saints;" who stands upon his watch-tower and looks abroad over the wide-spread wilderness around him, will find good cause to sound aloud the trumpet of alarm, when he perceives the dangers that are threatening the Church of Christ on every side. He will find that errors, which have long been regarded as exploded, are being, as it were, cunningly repaired, and brought forward again in opposition to the truth; and that Protestant England, with the Bible in her hand and in her heart, is called upon to receive as her mother and her friend, that idolatrous church, whose claims are as ill-founded, but as daringly presumptuous, as they ever were. I wish to show what Rome once was. And she is, and ever will be, the same. I would therefore set before the ignorant and the forgetful, the facts of by-gone days, and remind them, that the Papacy has changed in nothing but in the arts of deceit and speciousness.

MEMORIALS

OF

THE ENGLISH MARTYRS.

LUTTERWORTH.



A MILD spring morning had succeeded to the cold deep gloom of night. Broken clouds were scattered here and there over the clear sky, but the rising sun spread the radiance and the glow of its beams over the whole broad expanse, steeping the nearer clouds in a flood of golden light, flushing the more distant with rosy lustre, and pouring down its brilliant rays over a truly English landscape. Pastures were there, clothing the sloping hills with lawns of richest verdure, some sprinkled over with cowslips, others yellow with buttercups; hedge-rows of vivid green, whence the milk-white flowers of the hawthorn filled the air with perfume: a little stream winding its silvery way through the meadows of the valley—the tender haze of morning still hovering over its glassy surface. A soft and genial shower was just over, and the glittering rain-drops trembled upon the leaves and springing grass, while the freshened earth gave forth that balmy smell which rises after gentle rain. All was green, and fresh, and sparkling with the warm golden sunshine.

The last traces of a long winter, seemed on that morning to have passed quite away. There was no touch of the cold cutting east, or the sharp north, in the soft playful breeze: no marks of wintry barrenness upon the ground: the humbler plants on every bank were pushing forth their bright green shoots, or unfolding their leaf-buds, or opening their tinted blossoms to the sun. Even the grey branches of the backward ash were hung with foliage. The bees were groping and murmuring in the bells of the cowslips: butterflies were in constant motion upon the buttercups of the meadows, and in the branches of the ash tree a goldfinch was fluttering its bright wings, and warbling forth its sweet and merry song. Every sight that met the eye, and every sound that fell upon the ear seemed to speak one language: night is gone, and winter is passed. It was a scene, and a season, and a morning such as Chaucer, nature's true poet, would have painted with words breathing of the sweetness and freshness of the morning air. It brought to mind his lovely Fable of the Flower and the Leaf, and his description of the morning hour:

> "When sweetest showers of rain descending soft
> Had caused the ground full many a time and oft
> To breathe around a fresh and wholesome air,
> And every dewy plain was clothèd fair
> With newest green, and bright and little flowers
> Sprung here and there in every field and mead;
> So very good and wholesome be the showers,
> That they renew whate'er was old and dead
> In winter time, and out of every seed
> Bursteth the herb, so that each living wight
> In this fresh season waxeth glad and light."

But higher thoughts than those which brought to mind Chaucer's description of a gladsome spring morning were linked with that spot. From the field-path which crossed these soft green pastures, the eye passed onward over the little stream, to the quiet country town upon the slope of the opposite hill. The mass of houses where the slant sunbeams glanced upon many a window-pane, was Lutterworth, and the tower of the venerable church which rose above the town and crowned the summit of the hill, standing forth in the full bright sunshine, and in bold relief from a

dark mass of purple clouds,—that was the church where Wycliffe preached. The very pastures, and the bright waters of the stream were the same where once that godly shepherd looked round upon the sphere which God had made his pastoral charge, and like the Psalmist, beheld in them the lovely types of spiritual comfort and heavenly refreshment to his flock.

Morning and the glad spring-season of the year accord with Lutterworth. There the men of England may bless God from the fulness of

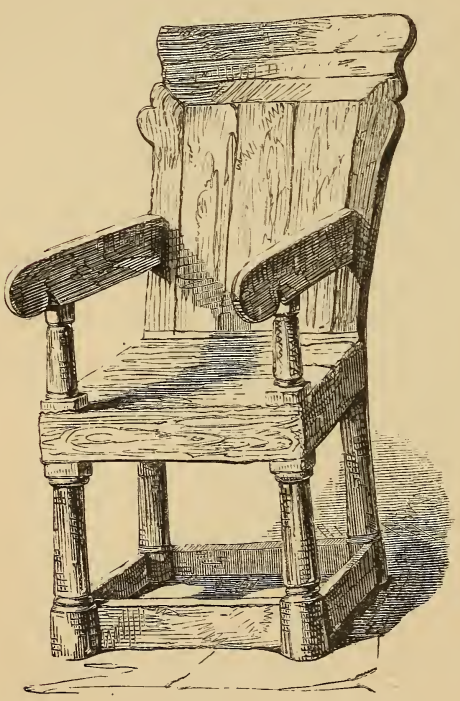
JOHN WYCLIFFE.

their grateful hearts, that their own countryman was called forth to take the lead in the great struggle, which then commenced in this most favoured land, for God's pure word of truth, and for the faithful preaching, and the free circulation of that blessed word.

A spring morning in the quiet pastures of Lutterworth, recalled the language of a higher, holier mind than that of Chaucer. Milton, in his

glorious words, has given the description of the dawn of heavenly day, from the black night of ignorance and error.

"When I recall to mind at last," he writes, "after so many dark ages, wherein the huge, overshadowing train of error had almost swept all the stars out of the firmament of the Church; how the bright and blissful Reformation (by Divine power) struck through the black and settled night of ignorance and antichristian tyranny; methinks a sovereign and reviving joy must needs rush into the bosom of him that reads or hears; and the sweet odour of the returning gospel imbathe his soul with the fragrancy of heaven. Then was the sacred Bible sought out of the dusty corners, where profane falsehood and neglect had thrown it, the schools opened, divine and human learning raked out of the embers of forgotten tongues, the princes and cities trooping apace to the new erected banner of salvation, the martyrs with the unresistible might of weakness, shaking the powers of darkness, and scorning the fiery rage of the old red dragon * * * and our Wycliffe's preaching, was the lamp at which all the succeeding reformers lighted their tapers."



WYCLIFFE'S CHAIR.

Lutterworth is a small market town in the neighbourhood of Leicester. There the church may still be seen, where this great and

early reformer of the English Church preached the Gospel of Christ crucified in its entireness and its simplicity. The very pulpit is the same from which he held forth the word of life to his people, and in the vestry is preserved the old oak chair in which, according to the tradition of the place, the pastor of Lutterworth died; this with a solid table, which is also said to have been his, came out of the old Rectory, when it was pulled down some fifty years ago. The church tower is a sort of landmark to the country round, standing on the highest spot in the immediate neighbourhood.

At Lutterworth, the name of Wycliffe, is still dear to the hearts of the people. Its pastors are faithful to that great commission, which Wycliffe first opened there. "Time was," said one—then preaching in that hallowed pulpit on the occasion of the putting up of a monument to the memory of Wycliffe in Lutterworth—"Time was when the name we meet to honour, was the very byword of scorn; when they who avowed regard for it were hunted for their lives; when the books which are now preserved in libraries, as the most sacred of their treasures, were denounced as containing deadly poison; when the men who retained them after warning were committed to the flames. And now this man takes his place in the very first rank of the world's benefactors: after the lapse of four centuries and a half, his memory is as fresh as ever; the very children in our cottages are taught to love their native place the better, because it was once his home, and afforded him a grave, and the simple announcement that we desire to thank God for that which he wrought, becomes a rallying cry for a whole neighbourhood."

Here it was, in this quiet fold, that that faithful servant of Christ, John Wycliffe, proved so good a shepherd to the flock which his Master had committed to his charge. Those who had seen him only in this retired country town, meekly adorning in his daily practice the heavenly doctrine which he set forth in such good old Saxon English on the Sunday, so that he might be "understanded" of the plain people to whom he preached—those that had heard him simplifying, after the gospel plan of glorious plainness, the eternal truths of God's word to the lowliest of his flock, sitting beside the bed of the sick and the dying, and pleading with

them for their perishing souls from the word of inspiration in their native tongue, and thus becoming to the most unlettered peasant an ambassador for Christ; and then kneeling in prayer, and pleading meekly for a blessing on the words which he had spoken—those that had seen him there and then, might never have supposed, that in that "poor parson of a country town," they beheld the skilful doctor of the schools, unrivalled in scholastic divinity, and able to vanquish in argument the most renowned scholars of his times.

For his great work as reformer, he had been prepared by a thorough course of discipline and training in the dialectics of the schools. Entering at Queen's College, Oxford, he passed thence to Merton, then the most learned college in the University, where he was first probationer and afterwards a fellow. In 1361 he was presented, by the master and scholars of Balliol, to the living of Fylingham, and in the same year he himself became master of Balliol.* Of this period of his life Dr. Vaughan, in his interesting biography, says: "The faculties of this eminent scholar were surrendered to the cold occupation of legal enquiries, and to that world of subtle questions which had been created by the schoolmen. But a complete knowledge of the ground and tactics of the enemy was not to be obtained at less hazard, or at less cost; and such pursuits would enable Wycliffe to unite serenity with ardour, and profound caution with daring enterprise."

Seven years, it is said, he lived in Oxford, filling a professor's chair during the week, and a preacher's pulpit on the Sunday. "On the week-days," says Fuller, "in the schools, proving to the learned what he meant to preach; and on the Lord's day, preaching in the pulpit what he had learned before; not unlike those builders in the second Temple, holding a sword in one hand and a trowel in the other—his disputing making his preaching to be strong, his preaching making his disputation to be plain."

Of how great importance was such a professor, such a teacher, and such a preacher to the first University of the realm as Oxford then was! He was a match for the most learned there in all the subtleties of scholastic divinity; he was able to clear the gospel Pearl from the

* The history of Wycliffe at Oxford is doubtful and confused. There were probably two Wycliffes at the University together. See Dr. Vaughan's Monograph.

BALLIOL COLLEGE, OXFORD.

heaps of rubbish by which he found it smothered, and to hold it forth in its unsullied lustre as that one great treasure, as freely offered to all, as it is really needed by all. Latin being then the common and conventional language of the scholar, the University was filled not merely by the youth of England, but by students from all parts of Europe. The mendicant friars were then swarming through the land. Outwardly disavowing the luxury and avarice of the monks, and with some right views of doctrine, their teaching was generally erroneous, their lives vicious and corrupt; they persecuted to imprisonment and even to death, all whom they found not of their order "travailing to sow God's word among the people;" and while they railed at the extortions of other ecclesiastics, they scrupled not to secure, by begging, the same spoil for themselves. These men made use of the mighty engine of preaching to arrest the attention and captivate the affections of the people, and went everywhere preaching, but alas, not the pure Gospel of the inspired word, but the vain traditions and absurd legends of superstition.

Wycliffe was fully persuaded of the high importance of preaching. He was admirably fitted for this glorious calling, which he followed with such wonderful success. The crying sins of his country had drawn down, not long before that time, the most awful calamities from God. A pestilence of frightful and fatal character, such as has scarcely been known in the annals of the world, ravaged every part of Europe. It had continued for two years spreading from place to place, while earthquakes rapidly succeeded one another. At last, the plague reached the shores of England. Heavy rains had fallen with scarce any intermission, from June to December, and in the August of the following year the pestilence broke out at Dorchester, and raged everywhere with dreadful virulence.

Wycliffe had been spared in this awful visitation, and the impression made upon him by the severity and goodness of God was deep and abiding. He stood forth as one who had been saved from the heavy wrath and hot displeasure of God, to warn others out of the heartfelt conviction of his own bosom, to flee from the wrath to come. All the advantages of knowledge and learning which the mendicants possessed, abounded in him. Above all, he was deeply versed in Holy Scripture.

He was a man of prayer, and felt, to use his own words, that he "*needed the internal instruction of a primary teacher.*" He knew the value of an immortal soul, and the peril of the faithless or slothful teacher. "There is," said he, "manslaughter of negligence or carelessness, of which God speaketh by his prophet to each curate or priest. 'If thou speakest not to the people, that a wicked man keep from his evil way, he shall die in his wickedness. I will seek his blood at thy hand.'"

The influence of his learning, his truth, his wisdom, his knowledge of

LUTTERWORTH CHURCH.

God's word, and his plain and eloquent preaching, was felt and acknowledged throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Simon de Islop, Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of England, describes him to be "a person on whose fidelity, circumspection and industry he confided: and he appointed him warden of Canterbury Hall, the college in Oxford, of which he was the founder, having fixed on him for that place for the honesty of his life, his laudable conversation and knowledge of letters."*

* But see Vaughan, *in loc.* It is more than doubtful whether this was the Wycliffe.

But Chaucer's portrait is perhaps the loveliest and most faithful limning that can be given of Wycliffe, as a clergyman of those times, and a faithful preacher of the gospel.

"A good man of religion did I see,
And a poor parson of a town was he:
But rich he was of holy thought and work,
He also was a learned man, a clerk,
And truly would Christ's holy Gospel preach,
And his parishioners devoutly teach.
Benign he was and wondrous diligent,
And patient when adversity was sent;
Such had he often proved, and loathe was he,
To curse for tithes and ransack poverty;
But rather would he give, there is no doubt,
Unto his poor parishioners about,
Of his own substance, and his offerings too.
His wants were humble, and his needs but few.
Wide was his parish—houses far asunder—
But he neglected nought for rain or thunder,
In sickness and in grief to visit all,
The farthest in his parish, great and small:
Always on foot, and in his hand a stave,
This noble example to his flock he gave;
That first he wrought, and afterwards he taught,
Out of the Gospel he that lesson caught,
And this new figure added he thereto—
That if gold rust, then what should iron do?
And if a priest be foul, on whom we trust,
No wonder if an ignorant man should rust:
And shame it is, if that a priest take keep,
To see an obscene shepherd and clean sheep.
Well ought a priest to all example give,
By his pure conduct, how his sheep should live,
He let not out his benefice for hire,
Leaving his flock encumbered in the mire,
While he ran up to London, or St. Paul's,
To seek a well-paid chantery for souls,
Or with a loving friend his pastime hold;
But dwelt at home and tended well his fold;
So that to foil the wolf he was right weary,
He was a shepherd, and no mercenary.
And though he holy was and virtuous,
He was to sinful men full piteous;
His words were strong, but not with anger fraught,
A love benignant he discreetly taught.

To draw mankind to heaven by gentleness,
And good example was his business.
But if that any one were obstinate,
Whether he were of high or low estate;
Him would he sharply check with altered mien.
A better parson there was nowhere seen.
He paid no court to pomps and reverence,
Nor spiced his conscience at his soul's expense;
But Jesu's love, which owns no pride or pelf,
He taught—but first he followed it himself."

But it was not his custom to protest against particular errors or vices. He condemned the whole system of the mendicants, both in its principles and in its practice, showing it to be most unlike the poverty of the Lord Jesus Christ and his disciples. Yet ever, in the true spirit of Christian liberty, he taught, that "men ought while destroying their errors to save their persons: desiring only to bring them to that living which Christ ordained for priests."

WYCLIFFE AND THE FRIARS.

I cannot refrain from here giving the well-known story of Wycliffe's answer to the mendicant friars, whose gross hypocrisy and ceaseless extor-

tions, he failed not to make the object of his honest indignation and severe invective even to the end of his life.

While lying, worn out by his labours and the persecutions he endured, very sick upon his bed, "certain friars came to him to counsel him, and when they had babbled much unto him as touching the Catholic Church,

In ye bigynnyng was ye word & ye word was at god · & god was ye word · yis was in ye bigynnyng at god · alle þingis weren maad bi hym · and wiouten hym was maad no þing · þat þing þat was maad in hym was lyf · and ye lyf was ye lyȝt of men · and lyȝt schyneþ in derknessis · and derknessis comprehendiden not it ·

PORTION OF WYCLIFFE'S BIBLE.

and of acknowledging his errors, and of the Bishop of Rome; Wycliffe being moved with the foolishness and absurdity of their talk, with a stout stomach, setting himself upright in his bed, repeated this saying out of the Psalms,* 'I shall not die, but live, and declare the noble works of the Lord.'"

The great work and achievement of John Wycliffe was the transla-

* Psalm cxviii. 17.

tion of the Holy Bible into the English tongue. In that glorious volume he not only did much to fix the language of his country to the pure Saxon English,* which excels all other for force and clearness, and for simple beauty of expression; but he gave to the people of his own country the word of God, in the pure and noble language of their household circles, making the saving truths of God's blessed word plain to every Englishman in his native tongue, and by so doing, began most effectually to drain off the stagnant and unwholesome pools of human tradition, and to open the pure wells of living water, which had long been choked up by them whose office it was to keep them ever pure and flowing; and for this great labour of love, the popish Knighton, the unceasing and inveterate enemy of Wycliffe and his pure Bible doctrines, brought against him an accusation which is his highest praise. "Christ delivered His gospel to the clergy and doctors of the Church, that they might administer to the laity, and to weaker persons, according to the states of the times and the wants of men. But this master John Wycliffe translated it out of Latin into English, and thus laid it more open to the laity, and to women, who could read, than it formerly had been to the most learned of the clergy."

The great effort of Wycliffe's life seems to have been to be good, and to do good; to serve his generation of every class and condition, in every possible way,—should we not say rather to give glory to God and to do honour to God. He was very jealous for the Lord of Hosts. To the service of God and of man, he brought a commanding genius, an apostolic zeal and energy, a mind stored with learning of every kind, an unwearied perseverance and undaunted courage, above all, a heart filled with love, that simplicity of purpose which always distinguishes a truly noble character, and that simplicity of feeling which is inseparable from an unspoiled,

* The Anglo Saxon, which still continued to be the staple of the dialect of England, was at this time saturated with Norman words (no great number having been adopted into it since), and whilst Chaucer was labouring to *fix* the English tongue (its *winged* words) on principles of taste, amongst the courtiers and nobles, Wycliffe, perhaps even a more perfect master of it still, was establishing it yet more permanently by knitting up into it the immortal hopes of the people at large, and stamping it in a complete translation of the Bible, with "holiness to the Lord."—BLUNT'S *Sketch of the Reformation in England*, p. 94.

I ought rather to say, a renewed heart. He was acknowledged even by Archbishop Arundel, to be "a mighty clerk," whose skill in the scholastic discipline was incomparable. He could dissect and expose the most subtle sophistries of the schools, and reason and triumph with the tongue of the learned. His "great reputation fixed the eyes of the king and the government upon him, as the fittest person to vindicate his country from the ignominy and oppression of the papal tribute; he was dispatched among other illustrious men as the representative of her ecclesiastical interests, in the embassy to Bruges, to the sanction of whose judgment, the king and Parliament of England resorted, when they resolved that the very marrow of the realm should no longer be drained out to pamper the greediness and ambition of a foreign court."* Yet this man could come down to the comprehension of the unlearned, speaking the pure, but homely English to which they were accustomed, with a simplicity, a tenderness, and a sweetness which is scarcely to be equalled. Here is a specimen:—

"How much the higher a hill is, so much is the wind there greater; so how much higher the life is, so much stronger is the temptation of the enemy. God playeth with his child when he suffereth him to be tempted, as a mother rises from her much beloved child, and hides herself, and leaves him alone, and suffers him to cry, Mother, mother, so that he looks about, cries and weeps for a time, and at last when the child is ready to be overset with troubles and weeping, she comes again, clasps him in her arms, and kisses him, and wipes away the tears. So our Lord suffereth his loved child to be tempted and troubled for a time, and withdraweth some of his solace and full protection, to see what his child will do; and when he is about to be overcome by temptations, then he defendeth him, and comforteth him with his grace. And therefore, when we are tempted, let us cry for the help of our Father, as a child cries after the comfort of its mother. For whoso prayeth devoutly, shall have help oft to pray, and profits much to establish the heart in God, and suffers it not to bow about, now into this, and now into that. The fiend is overcome by busy and devout prayer, and becomes as feeble and without strength to them that

* "Le Bas."

are strong and persevering in devout prayers. Devout prayer of a holy soul, is as sweet incense which driveth away all evil savours, and enters up by odour of sweetness into the presence of God."

Wycliffe was fully aware that many of his foes were banded together to compass his death, and only waited for their opportunity to accomplish it, but he felt no alarm, he took no precautions. He had counted the cost of his warfare, and he was prepared for the worst that man could do unto him. In his 'Trialogus' he contends for the necessity of constant preparation for martyrdom. "It is a satanic excuse," he says, "made by modern hypocrites, that it is not necessary now to suffer martyrdom, as it was in the primitive Church, because now all, or the greatest part of living men, are believers, and there are no tyrants who put Christians to death; this excuse is suggested by the devil, for if the faithful would now stand firm by the law of Christ, and as His soldiers endure bravely any sufferings, they might tell the pope, the cardinals, the bishops and other prelates, how departing from the faith of the Gospel, they minister unfitly to God, and what perilous injury they commit against his people," and he adds, "Instead of visiting pagans, to convert them by martyrdom, let us preach constantly the law of Christ to princely prelates; martyrdom will then meet us speedily enough, if we persevere in faith and patience."

For many years, some of the highest in rank among his own countrymen, held over him the shield of their powerful protection. John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Lord Henry Percy stood by Wycliffe's side when called to answer for himself before the primate of the English Church, and the bigotted and violent William Courtney, bishop of London.

When a second time brought up before the archbishop and the rest of the bishops in the chapel at Lambeth, "when all men expected he should be devoured, being brought into the Lion's den,—then it was that Sir Lewis Clifford, himself a partizan of the reformer, came into the midst of the assembly, and bringing a message from the Queen Dowager, commanding the council not to pass any final sentence against Wycliffe, while the people clamoured without for his release; and thus," says Fuller, "his person was saved out of the hands of his enemies, as was once the doctor's

ENTRANCE TO LAMBETH PALACE.

namesake, and 'they feared the people, for all men counted *John*, that he was a prophet indeed.'"

When the University of Oxford, which had before protected him from the power of the Papal Bulls, five of which had been fulminated against him, condemned his doctrines, and banished the man who was their chief ornament; when he was abandoned by the Duke of Lancaster, who bade him give up his novelties, and submit quietly to his superiors; then, when Wycliffe was left alone and unprotected by man—it pleased God in his wise providence, to shelter his faithful servant by the peculiar crisis of the times, the schism which took place in the popedom. All Christendom was distracted by the claims and conflicts of the rival popes, and thus the attention of the persecuting spirits of the day was turned away for a time from the bold heretic of distant England.

And now that Wycliffe was left alone and quite unprotected, like a truly noble spirit, he neither shrank from martyrdom nor sought it. He was to be found in his proper place, in his quiet parsonage and parish of Lutterworth. Summoned by Pope Urban the Sixth, to appear before him, and to answer for his heretical opinions at Rome, he was disabled by paralysis from undertaking so long and difficult a journey. He not only declined, however, to obey the summons, but in plainest terms, refused to acknowledge the power of the Bishop of Rome, to summon a subject of the king of England before him. He protests, that if he might travel in person, he would, with God's will, go to the Pope; but Christ had compelled him, he adds, to the contrary, and to Christ's will it became, both him and the Pope to submit, unless the Pope were willing to set up openly for Antichrist.

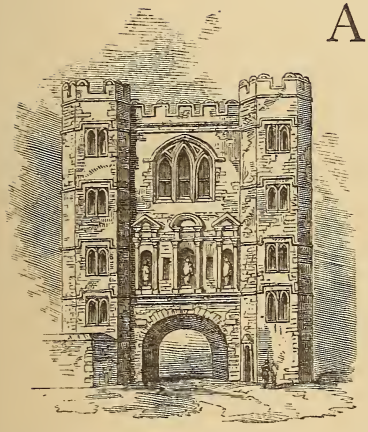
Not long after, he was seized with the palsy in his own church at Lutterworth, and died in peace two days after. "Admirable," says Fuller, in his quaint, but expressive style, "that a hare so often hunted, with so many packs of dogs, should die at last quietly, sitting in his form."

Forty-one years after his death, his body was taken up by the decree of the Council of Constance, from its quiet resting-place in the chancel of his own parish church. "Parsons the Jesuit," says Fuller, "snarls at Mr. Foxe, for counting Wycliffe a martyr in his calendar, as so far from suffering

violent death, that he was never so much as imprisoned for the opinion he maintained. But the phrase may be justified in the large acceptance of the word, for *a witness of the truth.* Besides, the body of Wycliffe was martyred as to shame, though not to pain (as far as his adversaries' cruelty could extend), being taken up and burnt many years after his death. The ashes of the poor remains thus burnt, were thrown into the Swift, the little stream that flows close to the town of Lutterworth; but the Swift did convey his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn to the narrow seas, they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which is dispersed all the world over."

Those are not wanting who are busy to point out the faults of Wycliffe, but I may here remark, that it is a great mistake which men make in judging and writing of the great Reformers of the Christian faith, to assert that the cause is the less just or righteous, because its champions are human and subject to the errors and the sins of human infirmity. Of the accusations brought against John Wycliffe, there is scarcely one which has stood the test of careful and patient sifting. And if they had been proved —what then? "We have this treasure (saith the Apostle) in earthen vessels," and he that shall endeavour to prove a pitcher of clay to be a vase of gold, will take great pains to little purpose. Who would wish to hide the faults of godly men? They that do so, forget the pattern of the Holy Scriptures, in which the inspired writers put prominently forward the faults and infirmities of God's brightest saints: the faithlessness of faithful Abraham—the artifice of Jacob, a plain man—the angry impatience of Moses, the meekest of men—the impurity of David, the man after God's own heart—the deplorable foolishness of Solomon, the wisest of men—the earthly faithlessness of the devoted and spiritual-minded John—the time-serving cowardly spirit of Peter, and the angry and persecuting spirit of Paul. Let those therefore who wish to search out the errors and the sins of godly saints, return to their Bibles for a wiser and better spirit, and surely they will learn to look upon Wycliffe and Luther, Cranmer and Latimer, as among the holiest and noblest uninspired disciples of that blessed and most gracious Master, whom they followed at an almost infinite distance, though nearer than most other men.

SMITHFIELD.



A WALK through Smithfield ought to awaken sad and serious thought in every Englishman's mind, when he considers to what an excess of savage bigotry, even his own countrymen have been degraded by "the deceiveableness of unrighteousness" in that system which the godly Cecil has termed, not without having good reason for the strong expression, "the masterpiece of Satan;" which has never sprung up and grown to any height in this free soil, or indeed in any land upon the broad earth which we inhabit, without bringing forth its bitter and deadly fruit.

Long, indeed, is the list that might be given of those who have suffered for the truth in the fires of Smithfield. There it was, that WILLIAM SAUTRE stood first and foremost in the glorious band. There he suffered, after having been degraded from his holy office to the rank of a layman, and given over to the secular power, with a frightful mockery of justice. We are told, that the civil powers were besought "to receive favourably the said Sir William Sautre, thus unto them recommended." And then Henry the Fourth was persuaded by the Bishop of Norwich, and the Archbishop of Canterbury to make out a terrible decree against him, and send it to the mayor and sheriffs of London to be put in execution, according

to these words :—"that in some public and open space, within the liberties of their city of London, the said William should be put into the fire, really to be burned, to the great horror of his offence, and the manifest example of other Christians." "Fail not in the execution therefore," are the last words of the cruel decree, "upon the peril that will fall thereupon." And what was this offence? "That in the sacrament of the altar, after the consecration of the priest, Sautre declared, there remaineth material bread!"

Another martyr who suffered at Smithfield in this reign, was JOHN BADBY, for an offence almost like that of William Sautre. The king's writ for his execution was sent down in the afternoon of the very day, on which sentence was passed upon him in the morning, and he was forthwith led to Smithfield. The profligate and thoughtless Prince Henry seems to have been led by curiosity, to witness the execution of this poor, honest-hearted man, and touched with compassion, he entreated him to recant, but in vain. The faggots were kindled, and as the flames arose, the sufferer cried for mercy, "calling belike upon the Lord, and not upon man." The generous-hearted Prince was moved, and commanded them to take away the tun which had been placed over him, and to quench the fire. The Prince renewed his entreaties, that he would forsake his heresy, offering him, as a bribe, a yearly stipend out of the king's treasury. The servant of Christ was of an immoveable spirit, and chose rather to die than to give up his pure and scriptural faith; and then it was that the choler of the Prince was stirred up, and to his disgrace he commanded him to be put again into the pipe or tun, and the wood being again kindled, the meek but undaunted victim expired in the flames.

We may turn next to the account given of RICHARD BAYFIELD. "Blessed Bayfield," as Foxe calls him, was one of the martyrs of Henry the Eighth's reign.—I single out but here and there one from that noble band of martyrs, who sealed the testimony of their faith with their blood in this same Smithfield.—The offence of Bayfield, who was a Benedictine monk at Bury St. Edmund's, began with his having the New Testament in his possession. Though I pass over his interesting story, I should wish my readers to be well read in this portion of the ecclesiastical history of their own country; and in spite of the arguments and the cavils of modern

objectors, I would refer them to "The Acts and Monuments" of the godly and honest John Foxe.

He was brought before Tonstal, Bishop of London, in St. Paul's church, and there degraded as Sautre had been, from holy orders. After they had taken from him, one by one, the vestments, or other various badges of his offices as priest, deacon, acolyte, and reader, and while he was kneeling on

OLD ST. PAUL'S.

the high step of the altar, the savage prelate Tonstal struck him so violent a blow on the chest with his crosier-staff, that he fell backwards in a swoon, with his head broken from the violence of his fall. He was then led back to Newgate, and there he passed the hour which was granted him in prayer. The stake had been in the meantime prepared for him in Smithfield; and he went to the fire manfully and joyfully. There, for lack of a speedy fire, he was more than half an

hour alive, and when his left arm was on fire and burned, he rubbed it with his right hand, and it fell from his body; but he continued in prayer to the end without moving. Alas, we read that Sir Thomas More was one of the chief persecutors of this good man; "He not only brought him to his end," says Foxe, "but ceased not to rake after his death in his ashes, to pry and spy out what sparks he could find of reproach and contumely, whereby to rase out all good memory of his name and fame." The few words added by Foxe on More are very striking. He says of him, "He was a man so blinded in the zeal of Popery, so deadly set against the one side, and so partially affectionate unto the other, that in them whom he favoureth he can see nothing but all fair roses and sweet virtue: in the other which he hateth, there is never a thing that can please his fantasy, but all is as black as pitch."

James Bainham was another of the Smithfield martyrs, and his dying words bare a strong testimony to the spirit of Christian love which was in him to the last. "The Lord forgive Sir Thomas More," was the prayer he uttered in the flames, and "pray for me all good people," he added, and so prayed he till the fire took his bowels and his head. When the fire had half consumed his arms and legs, he cried out: "Oh, ye papists, behold ye look for miracles, and here now ye see a miracle: for in this fire I feel no more pain than if I were in a bed of down; but it is to me as a bed of roses."

Few seem to have been more cruelly treated than the noble and learned Lambert. He was chained to the stake; and when the wretches who conducted his execution saw that his legs were consumed in the fire and burned up to the stumps, they withdrew the fire from him, leaving only a small fire and coals under him, and with their halberts and pikes pitched him as far as the chain would reach. But strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, the dying martyr lifted up such hands as he had, and cried unto the people, "None but Christ, none but Christ." Little did he think, perhaps, that those words would be afterwards echoed by the lips of so many faithful followers of his blessed Lord; that "None but Christ, none but Christ," would be the watchword of the soldiers of Christ to cheer them in the conflict, and

lead them forward in the same path; stedfastly setting their faces towards the heavenly city, through evil report and good report, till they were called to enter into their rest, to be with Christ for ever.

Perhaps the most interesting victim of the fires of Smithfield was the celebrated ANNE ASKEW. I would dwell a little longer upon the sad story of this gentle and delicate lady. She had been singled out by the crafty and ambitious enemies of Queen Katharine Parr and the godly ladies of her court, to be the instrument through whom they might find an accusation against the Queen, for holding the faith and the principles of the Reformation. Anne Askew was the youngest daughter of Sir William Askew, of Kelsey, in Lincolnshire; her eldest sister had been engaged to marry a gentleman of the name of Kyme, a harsh and bigoted papist; but the sister died, and she was compelled by her father to take her sister's place, and become the wife of Mr. Kyme. It had turned out a most unhappy marriage for poor Anne Askew. Her education had been superior to that usually given to her sex, and she was a woman of enlightened mind, unlike in character and disposition to her morose and narrow-minded husband. She seems to have been a child of God from her earliest years, and to have searched and prized the Holy Scriptures, which had made her wise unto salvation. Her love of truth as it is found in its purity and freshness in the word of inspiration, had given great displeasure to her husband, and she was cruelly driven from her home. Being compelled to come up to London to sue for a divorce, the persecution of her husband and the Popish priests followed her, and she fell into the toils which they had laid for her. Anne Askew—for she had resumed her maiden name—was evidently one of those children of God who had been fitted by him to adorn the doctrine they profess with those holy graces which are the peculiar fruits of the Spirit of God in the heart. Her thorough knowledge of Holy Scripture, the hold which it had obtained upon her mind, the influence which it had exercised upon her conduct, the sweetness which it had breathed over her manners, seem to have won for her the affections of those noble and pious ladies who formed the circle of the Queen's society. Katharine Parr herself is said to have been her friend, to have re-

ceived books from her, and to have returned many a kind message. There was probably a more unguarded and fearless spirit in this meek and gentle lady than in any other of the followers of Christ belonging to her sex and rank. But however that might be, she soon found that all the sweet familiar intercourse which she had held on various occasions with the godly ladies of the court must cease; and that her attachment to the writings and memory of them must be locked up as inviolate secrets in her own bosom; for she was apprehended on the charge of holding heretical opinions against the Six Articles, with especial reference to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and sent to prison. Her conduct from that time presents a remarkable combination of lofty self-possession and touching simplicity and sweetness—of firmness, constancy, and a ready wit (according to the ancient meaning of that word), and all these qualities seem to have been in perfect keeping in her character and conduct, and to have made her at the same time one of the most feminine and courageous of her sex.

Two objects were plainly manifest in all the examinations which she underwent—the first was to make her criminate herself, the second to lead her to criminate the Queen and those of her ladies who were suspected of holding "the new learning," as the eternal truths of the Gospel were termed by the Papists.

We read that she was examined and questioned concerning her opinions by Christopher Dare, and Sir Martin Bowes, the then Lord Mayor, and their brother commissioners. With what inimitable simplicity did she reply in that conversation which is recorded to have taken place between the Lord Mayor and herself!

"What if a mouse eat the sacramental bread after it is consecrated?" was the absurd question; "what shall become of the mouse; what sayest thou, thou foolish woman?"

"Nay, what say you, my Lord, will become of it?" she answered.

Thus urged, the blundering Lord Mayor replied: "I say, that the mouse is damned!"

"Alack, poor mouse," was her quiet reply; and so at once all his divinity was discomfited.

She herself in the most artless language gives the account of her various examinations. In her interview with a priest she likewise called upon him to answer his own questions, on which he told her "that it was against the order of the schools, that he who asked the question should be required to answer it;" she at once tells him, that "she is but a woman, and knows not the course of schools." She then recounts her conference with his archdeacon, when sent for by Bonner, and afterwards with Bonner himself, when he endeavoured to gain her confidence by a pretended interest in her welfare, and so to put her off her guard. "He brought forth this unsavoury similitude," she said, "that if a man had a wound, no wise surgeon could minister help unto it before he had seen it uncovered: in like case, said he, can I give you no good counsel unless I know wherewith your conscience is burdened." "I answered," said Anne Askew, "that my conscience was clear, and that to lay a plaster upon a whole skin was much folly."

But we pass over these examinations, in which the patience of those adversaries who could not overcome her patience was at length exhausted. These bold and crafty men were determined to spare neither threat nor violence by which they might extort from her some word or other as a ground of accusation against the Lady Herbert, who was the Queen's sister, or the Duchess of Suffolk, and so at last Queen Katharine herself. As yet they discovered nothing. Rich, and another of the council, came to her in the Tower where she was then confined, and demanded that she should make the disclosures which they required concerning her party and her friends. She told them nothing. "Then they did put me on the rack," she relates, "because I confessed no ladies or gentlemen to be of my opinion; and thereon they kept me a long time, and because I lay still and did not cry, my Lord Chancellor and Mr. Rich took pains to rack me with their own hands till I was nigh dead." These two wretches, it is recorded, provoked by her saint-like endurance, ordered the lieutenant of the Tower to rack her again. He, Sir Anthony Knevitt, "tendering the weakness of the woman," positively refused to do so. Then Wriothesly and Rich threw off their gowns, and threatening the lieutenant that they would complain of his disobedience to the King,

"they worked the rack themselves, till her bones and joints were almost plucked asunder." When the lieutenant caused her to be loosed down from the rack, she immediately swooned. "Then," she writes, "they recovered me again." After that, "I sate two long hours reasoning with my Lord Chancellor on the bare floor, where he with many flattering words persuaded me to leave my opinion; but my Lord God (I thank his everlasting goodness) gave me grace to persevere, and will do I hope, to the very end." And she concludes this account to her friend, by saying, "Farewell, dear friend, and pray, pray, pray."

She gives her confession of faith, and concludes it with this beautiful prayer: "O Lord! I have more enemies now than there be hairs on my head! yet, Lord, let them never overcome me with vain words, but fight thou, Lord, in my stead: for on Thee cast I my care! With all the spite they can imagine, they fall upon me, who am Thy poor creature. Yet, sweet Lord, let me not set by them that are against me; for in Thee is my whole delight. And, Lord, I heartily desire of Thee that Thou wilt of Thy most merciful goodness forgive them that violence which they do, and have done, unto me; open also Thou their blind hearts, that they may hereafter do that thing in Thy sight which is only acceptable before Thee, and to set forth Thy verity aright, without all vain fantasies of sinful men. So be it, O Lord, so be it."

Much of her time was spent in writing, and many of her compositions display rare abilities. One of them is prefaced by these striking words: *Written by me, Anne Askew, that neither desire death, nor fear its might: and as merry as one bound to heaven.* The following ballad was composed by her when awaiting execution:

Like as the armèd knight
Appointed to the field,
With this world will I fight,
And faith shall be my shield.

Faith is that weapon strong,
Which will not fail in need;
My foes therefore among,
Therewith will I proceed.

As it is had in strength
And force of Christ's way,
It will prevail at length
Though all the devils say nay.

Faith in the fathers old
Obtainèd righteousness,
Which makes me very bold
To fear no world's distress.

I now rejoice in heart,
And hope bids me do so;
For Christ will take my part,
And ease me of my woe.

Thou say'st, Lord, whoso knock,
To them wilt thou attend;
Undo therefore the lock
And thy strong power send.

More enemies now I have
Than hairs upon my head,
Let them not me deprave,
But fight thou in my stead.

On thee my care I cast,
For all their cruel spite;
I set not by their haste
For thou art my delight.

I am not she that list
My anchor to let fall
For every drizzling mist:
My ship's substantial.

Not oft use I to write
In prose nor yet in rhyme;
Yet will I show one sight
That I saw in my time.

I saw a royal throne,
Where Justice should have sat;
But in her stead was one
Of moody cruel wit.

Absorbed was righteousness,
As by the raging flood;
Satan in his excess
Sucked up the guiltless blood.

Then thought I,—Jesus, Lord,
When thou shalt judge us all,
Hard is it to record
On these men what will fall.

Yet, Lord, I thee desire
For that they do to me,
Let them not taste the hire
Of their iniquity.

Unable to walk or stand, from the tortures she had suffered, poor Anne Askew was carried in a chair to Smithfield, and when brought to the stake, was fastened to it by a chain which held up her body, and one who beheld her there describes her as "*having an angel's countenance, and a smiling face.*" She had three companions in her last agonies, fellow martyrs with herself, John Lacels, a gentleman of the court and household of King Henry, John Adams, a tailor, and Nicholas Belenian, a priest of Shropshire. The apostate Shaxton preached the sermon. The three Throckmortons, near kinsmen of the Queen, and members of her household, had drawn near to comfort Anne Askew and her companions, but were warned that they were marked men, and entreated to withdraw.

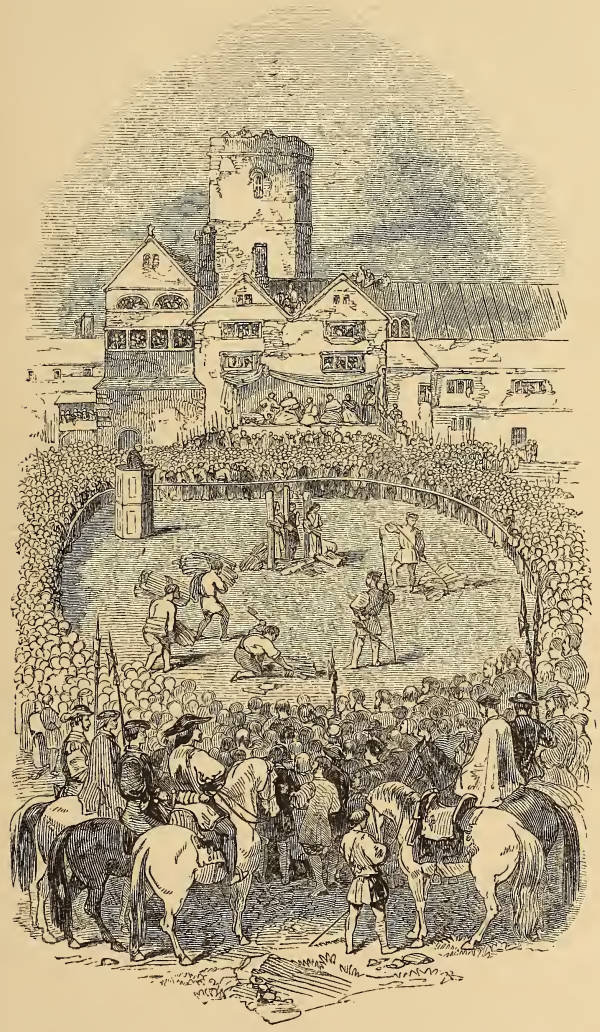
At the very last, a written pardon from the King was offered to Anne Askew, upon condition that she would recant. The fearless lady turned away her eyes, and would not look upon it. She told them that she came not thither to deny her Lord and Master. The fire was ordered to be put under her, "and thus," to use the words of John Foxe, "the

good Anne Askew, with these blessed martyrs, having passed through so many torments, having now ended the long course of her agonies, being compassed in with flames of fire, as a blessed sacrifice unto God, she slept in the Lord, A.D. 1546, leaving behind her a singular example of Christian constancy for all men to follow." Her crime was the denial of the Mass. "Lo, this," she wrote, "is the heresy that I hold, and for it must suffer death." She kept the faith to her God, she kept the faith to her friends, for she betrayed no one, enduring shame and agony with meek unshaken constancy. *None but Christ, none but Christ* could have made the weakness of a delicate woman so strong, the feebleness of a mortal creature so triumphant!

And thus the square of Smithfield, which was made, in the reign of Henry the First, "a lay stall of all ordure or filth," and the place of execution for felons and other transgressors, has become not only drenched with the blood of martyrs, but hallowed by the faith and patience of the saints, by the witness of their good confessions, and by the breath of their dying prayers and praises.

But why bring these horrible details forward? Because, I repeat, if ever there was a time when it was right to show the real character of Popery, it is now. The principles of Popery are beginning to spring up throughout the length and breadth of the land, openly in some parts, covertly in others; and men whose Bibles might have taught them other things, are beginning to be enamoured with the delusions and ensnaring allurements of a system which can appear to be anything or everything in order to suit all times and all circumstances: a system which, in the doctrine of tradition, opens the door to the most unbridled license, and finds a cloak for every enormity. We are told that those deadly superstitions, those savage persecutions, those inhuman tortures were rather the fruit of those dark ages than peculiar to Popery. I cannot agree to this. Popery contains in itself the germ of all the deadly errors and dreadful practices which have ever been inseparable from bigotry and superstition.

The opinion of one of the most profound and acute observers that ever lived—Lord Bacon—is to be noted on this point. In his essay on



SMITHFIELD IN 1546—MARTYRDOM OF ANNE ASKEW AND OTHERS.

(From Foxe's "Acts and Monuments.")

Superstition, he speaks of the causes of superstition, and one would almost think that he were describing the characteristics of Popery, when he enumerates what he terms the causes of superstition; these are, he says, "pleasing and sensual rites and ceremonies,—excess of outward and pharisaical holiness,—over-great reverence of traditions, which cannot but load the Church,—the stratagems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre,—the favouring too much of good intentions, which openeth the gate to conceits and novelties,—the taking an aim at divine matters by human, which cannot but breed a mixture of incoherent imaginations; and lastly, barbarous times, especially joined with calamities and disasters." Here we find that what many shallow and modern reasoners put first, laying the blame rather on the times than on the system, he places last among his causes.

It is sometimes urged in defence of Rome that men of other churches, holding a purer faith, have been persecutors. I reply that the pure churches to which they belonged, never taught them to persecute as part of their system. The Popish Church, on the contrary, in this and in many other ways, sides with the worst corruptions of the human heart. With the Romanist, persecution even unto death, is not the perversion of his system, but part of the system itself. I copy word for word, from the notes of "the Douay Bible and Rhemish Testament, extracted from the quarto editions of 1816 and 1818, published under the patronage of the Roman Catholic Bishops and Priests of Ireland. There, in the note appended to Rev. xvii. 6, it is written: "*The Protestants foolishly expound, 'drunk with blood of Rome,' for that they put heretics to death, and allow of their punishment in other countries; but their blood is not called the blood of saints, no more than the blood of thieves, man-killers, and other malefactors: for the shedding of which, by order of justice, no commonwealth shall answer.*"

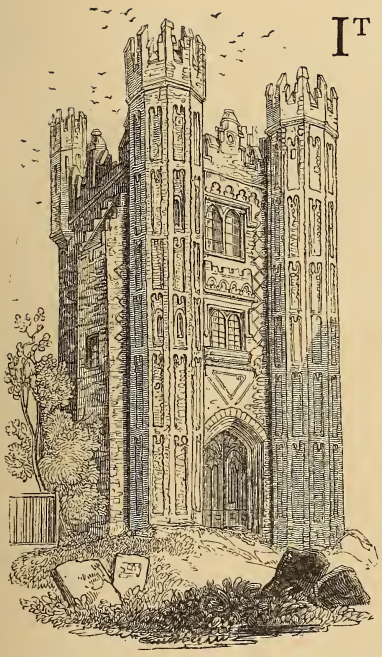
These facts are not brought forward to inflame the reader against Papists, but to inform him as to the real character of Popery. To turn away from Popery to the pure Christianity of the Holy Bible, is like raising the eyes from the gloom of Smithfield, lighted only by the flames of blazing faggots and dying martyrs, and resounding with the shouts of savage

persecutors, to the broad expanse of heaven as it appears to me, to night. Though all is wrapt in partial gloom below, far far above, the moon is rising in her mild and quiet glory, and the stars are sparkling silently in the calm clear depths of the cloudless sky.

THE BIBLE WEIGHED AGAINST POPISH CEREMONIES AND SUPERSTITIONS.

(From Foxe's "Acts and Monuments.")

HADLEIGH.



IT is with no common feeling of interest that I retrace my steps to Hadleigh, the sphere to which I was first called to labour in the ministry. I entered Hadleigh for the first time from Lavenham,* by the same way that Rowland Tayler came, when he last entered his parish, and passing along through the streets then lined with his weeping parishioners to Aldham Common, where he was burnt to death at the stake.

From the low sloping hills, which rise on almost every side of the old town at Hadleigh, I saw the steeple of the venerable church rising among the trees, and soon after I looked down upon the winding river, and the green meadows, and the bridge, and the ancient houses of the town. It was at the bridge foot, that a poor man was waiting with his five small children, who, when he saw Dr. Tayler come riding over the bridge, he and his children fell down upon their knees, and held up their hands, and cried

* At Lavenham, Dr. Tayler was kept for two days by the sheriff of Suffolk, who waited there till he was joined by a great number of gentlemen and justices upon great horses, who were all appointed to aid the sheriff.

with a loud voice, and said, "O dear father, and good shepherd, Dr. Tayler! God help and succour thee, as thou hast many a time succoured me and my poor children." "Such witness," adds Foxe, "had the servant of God, of his virtuous and charitable alms given in his lifetime: for God would now that the poor should testify of his good deeds, to his singular comfort, to the example of others, and confusion of his persecutors and tyrannous adversaries. For the sheriff and others that led him to death, were wonderfully astonied at this, and the sheriff rebuked the poor man for so crying."

It is recorded that Suffolk was the first county in England in which the scriptural principles of the Reformation took deep root. It is well known, that on the active persecution of the followers of Wycliffe, many of the itinerant preachers of the true and holy doctrines which he taught, came into the eastern counties, and spread throughout Norfolk and Suffolk, the pure "faith once delivered to the saints." There Sautre, the first martyr to those doctrines, preached the Gospel. Thither also came afterwards the celebrated Bilney, 'Saint Bilney' as Foxe calls him, preaching Christ crucified in godly simplicity wherever he went. The spiritualities of the diocese of those counties, were also at one time held in commission by Dr. Rowland Tayler and Dr. Wakefield, who, according to Strype, were appointed by Archbishop Cranmer, when the Popish Bishop of Norwich resigned his see in the reign of Edward the Sixth.

Norfolk and Suffolk were thus, as it were, as a soil prepared for the good seed of the Word of God. The men of Suffolk were alike distinguished for their devoted attachment to the truth and their loyal adherence to Queen Mary, supporting her title to the crown of England in preference to the claims of the Protestant Lady Jane Grey, simply because they knew Mary to be the rightful heir. They had stipulated with Mary for liberty of conscience in regard to their faith before they put the crown upon her head and openly declared for her, and received this answer, that "she meant graciously not to compel or strain other men's consciences otherwise than God should, as she trusted, put in their hearts a persuasion of the truth, through the opening of His word unto them;" but the Queen broke her word when power was in her hands, repeating her promise

in a proclamation with this addition, "Until such time as further orders by common assent may be taken therein."

Hadleigh was, it appears, well worthy of the godly county of Suffolk. "The town of Hadleigh," writes John Foxe, "was one of the first that received the word of God in all England, at the preaching of Master Thomas Bilney, by whose industry the Gospel of Christ had such gracious success, and took such root there, that a great number of that parish became exceedingly well learned in the Holy Scriptures, as well women as men, so that a man might have found among them many that had often read the whole Bible through, and that could have said a great part of St. Paul's Epistles by heart, and very well and readily have given a godly learned sentence in any matter of controversy. Their children and servants were also brought up and trained so diligently in the right knowledge of God's word, that the whole town seemed rather a university of the learned, than a town of cloth-making or labouring people; and (what most is to be commended) they were for the more part faithful followers of God's word in their living."

After Bilney's martyrdom, Thomas Rose kept up the preaching of God's word at Hadleigh for six years, till on suspicion of being concerned in the burning of the rood at Dovercourt, near Harwich, he was arrested on the charge of heresy, and committed to the Bishop of Lincoln's prison in Holborn. To Hadleigh, though many efforts were made by his friends there to procure his recall, he did not return; he came, however, to Stratford, a village about six miles from Hadleigh, and there remained preaching the Gospel for three years, so that his faithful friends had frequent opportunities of communicating with him, and attending his ministry.

In the year 1544, Archbishop Cranmer presented the living of Hadleigh to his chaplain, Dr. Rowland Tayler, and here this good and learned man fixed his residence, and soon endeared himself to his flock, by the faithfulness of his preaching, the consistent godliness of his life, and the hearty kindness of his disposition. The character which Foxe gives of Rowland Tayler is so beautiful, that I cannot resist introducing it:

"He was a right perfect divine and parson; who at his first entering into his benefice did not, as the common sort of beneficed men do, let out

his benefice to a farmer, that shall gather up the profits, and set in an ignorant unlearned priest to serve the cure; and so they have the fleece, little or nothing care for feeding the flock: but contrarily, he forsook the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, with whom he before was in household, and made his personal abode and dwelling in Hadleigh, among the people committed to his charge; where he, as a good shepherd, abiding and dwelling among his sheep, gave himself wholly to the study of Holy Scripture, most faithfully endeavouring himself to fulfil that charge which the Lord gave unto Peter, saying: 'Peter, lovest thou me? Feed my lambs, feed my sheep, feed my sheep.' This love of Christ so wrought in him, that no Sunday nor holy-day passed, nor other time when he might get the people together, but he preached to them the word of God, the doctrine of their salvation.

"Not only was his word a preaching unto them, but all his life and conversation was an example of unfeigned Christian life and true holiness. He was void of all pride, humble and meek as any child: so that none were so poor but they might boldly, as unto their father, resort unto him: neither was his lowliness childish or fearful, but as occasion, time, and place required, he would be stout in rebuking the sinful and evil doers; so that none was so rich but he would tell him plainly his fault, with such earnest and grave rebukes as became a good curate and pastor. He was a man very mild, void of all rancour, grudge or evil will, ready to do good to all men, readily forgiving his enemies, and never sought to do evil to any."

Tayler, like his parishioners at Hadleigh, was greatly indebted to Mr. Bilney for the knowledge of the truth. Bilney with his friend and associate Latimer, had been the two great instruments of introducing the pure faith of the gospel at Cambridge: and at that time Tayler was a resident at that university. There Bilney's holy life and extraordinary influence, and Latimer's plain and faithful preaching, while they stirred up the rancour of the Popish party, and drew down upon them a fierce and powerful persecution; won over to the truth, the hearts and consciences of all single-minded enquirers. Rowland Tayler was one of these, resembling Bilney in his modesty and learning, and Latimer in the dauntless spirit and hearty

HADLEIGH CHURCH.

simplicity of his character. Such a pastor, and such a preacher, would be most welcome to the good people of Hadleigh, prepared as they were to receive and value him.

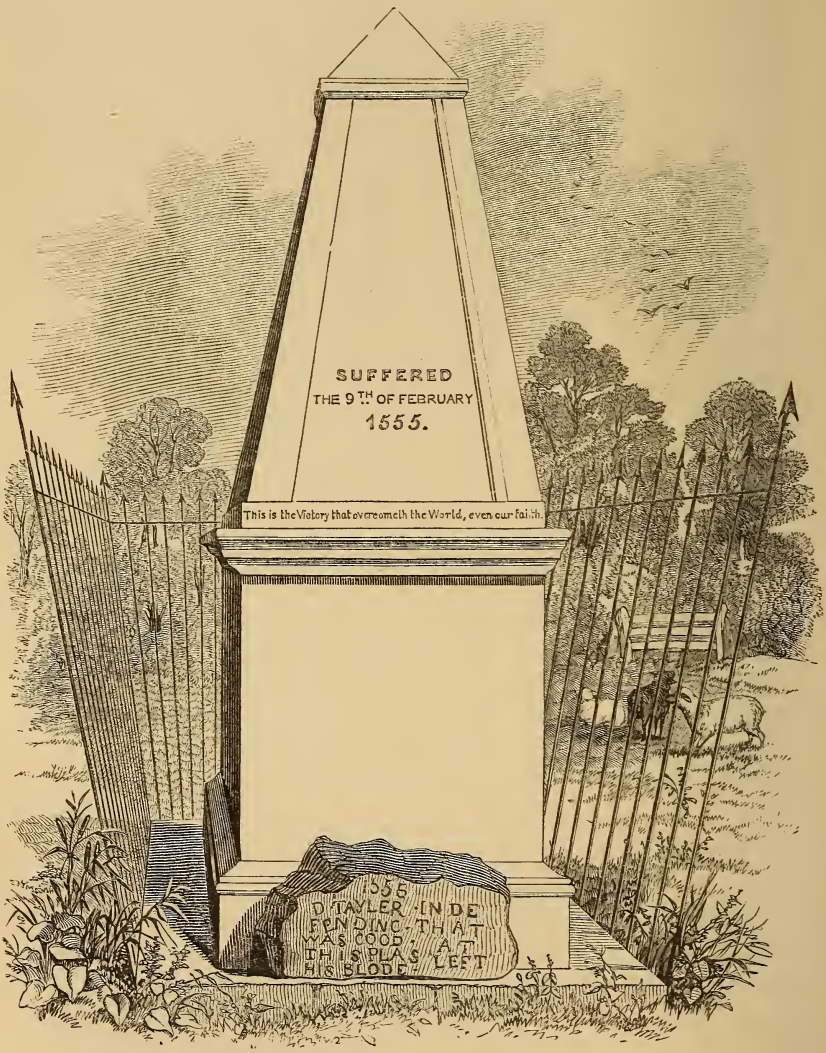
I recall with pleasure, the old town of Hadleigh, as it first appeared to me, more than forty years ago—the broad high street, with a few modern houses planted here and there among its old buildings and lowly cottages —the green churchyard, and the spacious and venerable church,—the noble tower which formed the gateway of the old rectory house, with little more than the space of a carriage-drive between that and the church-tower. it was a bright sunny day in spring, and lilacs and syringas were blooming in the cottage gardens, and women sitting at their spinning-wheels before their cottage doors, and children playing in the street.

The ancient red-brick rectory tower though built in the reign of Henry the Seventh, by a Dr. Pykenham, at that time the rector of Hadleigh, stands as sound and entire as if but lately erected. The ground story is chiefly taken up by the gateway,—on the left side is a kind of dungeon, on the right, the spiral stone staircase leading to the chambers above. Immediately over the gateway of Dr. Pykenham's tower, as it is called, was the study of Rowland Tayler. One of its turrets forms a small oratory, and an old painting of the interior of the church, as it was in former days, is upon the wall above the fire-place. Part of the floor of this old room forms a trap-door to a little chamber beneath, in which a tall man cannot stand upright; but where, in times of danger, a person might find a safe and convenient retreat. There is a story current, which those who tell it do not believe, that Rowland Tayler was hidden in this secret chamber, and that he either escaped, or was dragged out through the little window; but the character of so bold and fearless a champion of the truth, gives the lie to the supposition; and one thing is certain, that no man of the bulk of the stout-hearted and stout-bodied parson of Hadleigh, could possibly have been squeezed through the narrow mullions of that small window. Another place of concealment was very lately discovered in this tower, a recess in the wall of a small oratory which is in one of the corner turrets. This recess is spacious enough for a man to lie there, at his full length, and is so formed, that he who was concealed in it might hear

distinctly every word spoken in the larger and outer apartment. It is high in the wall above a doorway, and can only be reached by a ladder. In this recess were found a great number of peach stones, and it was conjectured that the fruit had been given for food or refreshment to the person concealed there. The ancient tower seems to have been the only part of the rectory house built in Henry the Seventh's reign.

Hadleigh church is, from its size, a noble and spacious edifice, with nothing remarkable in its architecture. It is celebrated, not only as the building in which Rowland Tayler preached, but as the spot where Guthrum the Dane, who was converted by king Alfred, was buried in the year 889; Hadleigh was then the capital, or head-liege, where the royal convert fixed his residence, when the government of East Anglia was given to him. A florid gothic arch of a much later age upon the southern wall of the church, marks the grave of the Danish warrior.

The town of Hadleigh, containing about four thousand inhabitants, chiefly consists of one long street, nearly a mile in length, with two other streets branching off at right angles. At the end of one of these cross-streets, stand the almshouses, with their little lowly chapel in the midst. Often have I stood before the last of those small dwellings, with my eyes fixed upon the casement, through which the kind-hearted pastor flung in his glove in which he had put all the money that remained of his little store, as he was led by that way to Aldham Common. Never was a more shameful, or a more noble spectacle, than when that faithful pastor rode along through the streets of his own parish, turning to his weeping flock as he passed through them, and repeating the same words, "I have preached to you God's word and truth, and am come this day to seal it with my blood." A steep lane, with high banks on either side, leads up to the spot where Rowland Tayler was burnt. The distance is but short, and from thence, the tops of the houses, and the church steeple are seen beneath. It was then an open common, but is now a wide enclosed field. At some distance beyond, the little tower of Aldham church may be seen, from whence the Popish priest, "master Averth," was brought by Clark and Foster to perform the service of the mass in Rowland Tayler's church. An old rude stone marks the very spot where this servant of Christ stood



MEMORIAL STONE AND MONUMENT TO ROWLAND TAYLER.

erect at the stake, and upon it these words are still to be read: "1555. D. Tayler, in defending that was good, at this plas left his Blode." A more imposing monument has recently been placed upon the site.

In every relation of life, Rowland Tayler appears to have adorned the doctrine of God his Saviour. He was bold and unflinching in his opposition to error, true to his trust, and faithful to his flock, walking simply and stedfastly in the path of duty, wherever it led; whether rebuking the Popish priest, who had intruded into his own church, or turning to his faithful servant John Hull, and resisting his entreaties to save himself by flight, saying: "Oh John, shall I give place to this thy counsel and worldly persuasion, and leave my flock in this danger! Remember the good shepherd Christ, which not alone fed His flock, but also died for His flock, Him must I follow, and with God's grace will do; therefore good John, pray for me: and if thou seest me weak at any time, comfort me, and discourage me not in this my godly enterprize and purpose."

What can be more manly and more faithful, than his plain dealing with the wily Bishop Gardiner, when examined before him! What more lovely, than the tribute that he paid to the mild and holy Bradford, whose companion in the King's Bench prison he became; when he told his friends who came to visit him, "that God had most graciously provided for him, to send him to that prison, where he found such an angel of God to be in his company to comfort him."

His cheerful spirit has been objected to by some; but they seem to have forgotten the quaint simplicity of those days, and to have made but little allowance for the natural temperament of this extraordinary man. He was devout, solemn, and grave, even to tenderness, when he spoke of parting from those he loved on earth, and going to meet a Master, for whose dear sake he suffered death: but about the mere putting off "the body of this death," and the circumstances that attended it, he was calm and fearless, and could even jest, though without levity, on the indignities which would be offered to his mortal frame. Can any thing be more affecting, than the account of his supper in the prison, with his wife and son, and his faithful servant John Hull; who were permitted through the gentleness of the keepers to come to him; or the scene of the following

morning, when his wife and her two children, the one an adopted orphan, went to meet him at Aldgate, at two o'clock in the morning, in the depth of winter, having watched all the night for his passing by; his interview also immediately after with his son and his faithful servant; when the latter lifted up the child, and set him on the horse before his father, and the father taking off his hat, lifted up his eyes towards heaven, and prayed for his son; then laid his hat on the child's head, and blessed him; and so delivered the child again to John Hull, whom he took by the hand and said; "Farewell, John Hull, the faithfullest servant that ever man had," "and so they rode forth," says Foxe, "the Sheriff of Essex, with four yeomen of the guard, the Sheriff's men leading him."

OLD CITY GATE, ALDGATE.

The account of that journey from London to Hadleigh is full of interest, and the last scene that closed the earthly pilgrimage of this true soldier of the cross, who did indeed endure hardness, with a right cheerful spirit, is worthy of his life. No one of all the company present on that memorable spot where he suffered, was so calm, or self-possessed as the martyr himself. Though forbidden to speak, he would not be prevented, but said again with a loud voice: "Good people, I have taught you nothing but God's holy word, and those lessons which I have taken out of God's blessed Book, the holy Bible; and I am come hither this day to seal it with my blood." He was much loved by his flock, and one of them, a poor woman, with a resolute spirit, when he kneeled down and prayed, pressed forward and knelt down beside him. The wretches who conducted the execution, attempted to drive her back, but she would not move. Even to the last, he was ill-treated and insulted, but holding up both his hands, he called upon God and said: "Merciful God of heaven, for Jesus Christ, my Saviour's sake, receive my soul into Thy hands." "Then stood he still," continues Foxe, "without either crying or moving,

with his hands folded together." He seems not even to have uttered a groan even in the midst of the flames. At last, a drunken fellow named Soyce, struck him on the head with a halbert, and he fell down dead into the fire.

Affixed to the pillar opposite the rector's pew in Hadleigh church, is the following inscription on an old brass plate:

"Gloria in Altissimo Deo."

Of Rowland Tailor's fame I shew
An excellent devyne,
And doctor of the civill lawe,
A preacher rare and fine.

Kinge Henry and Kinge Edward's dayes
Preacher and parson here,
That gave to God contynuall prayer,
And kept his flocke in fear.

And for the truthe condemned to dye,
He was in fierye flame,
Where he received patyentlie
The torment of the same.

And strongly suffered to th' ende,
Which made the standers by
Rejoice in God to see their frende
And pastor so to dye.

Oh Tailor, were thie myghtie fame
Uprightly here inrolde,
Thie deides deserve that thie good name
Were siphered here in golde.

Obiit, Anno Dni, 1555.

When Dr. Tayler was forced to leave his parish and his family, his place was supplied by an aged and godly minister, Richard Yeoman, who had been Dr. Tayler's curate. Richard Yeoman was well read in the Holy Scriptures, and fed his flock with the good food which God has supplied in His word for his sheep. But the living of Hadleigh now came into the possession of one Master Newall, a Popish priest, who did not come immediately to reside there, but driving out the good old curate, he put in his place a Popish curate to keep up there the Romish religion. Yeoman seems to have suffered from that time until his death a series of persecutions. Aged as he was—for he was upwards of seventy—he would not consent to be a slothful servant of the Master whom he loved. Like the itinerant followers of John Wycliffe; he wandered from place to place, seeking to spread wherever he went, the pure doctrines of the faith for which he suffered. "Then wandered he a long time from place to place," says Foxe, "moving and exhorting all men to stand

faithfully by God's word, earnestly to give themselves unto prayer; with patience to bear the cross now laid upon them for their trial, with boldness to confess the truth before their adversaries, and with an undoubted hope to wait for the crown and reward of eternal felicity." When he perceived his adversaries to lie in wait for him, he retired into Kent. He went forth in humble guise as a pedlar, with a little packet of laces, pins, and points, and such like ware. He went from place to place selling his goods, thus seeking to earn something towards the support of his wife and children. In Kent, however, Yeoman found himself again in danger, for there he fell into the hands of a noted persecutor, a justice named Moyle, who set the good old pastor in the stocks a day and a night. Yeoman returned after this, secretly, to Hadleigh, and for more than a year he was concealed in the town house or Guildhall. He was locked up in a chamber, and passed his time in devout communion with his God, and in carding wool which his poor wife spun. His wife was accustomed during the time that her husband thus lay hid, to go to those of his flock, who had loved and valued the ministrations of their godly curate, to beg bread and meat for herselt and her children.

The new Popish rector at length discovered the retreat of Richard Yeoman, and determined to apprehend the old man. Taking with him the bailiff's deputies and servants, he came by night, broke open five doors, and reached at last the chamber where the aged pastor was in bed with his wife and children. With disgusting indecency of speech and action, he attacked the good minister and his wife, and endeavoured to drag the clothes off their bed. Yeoman, however, held the clothes fast, bidding his wife to rise and dress; and to the brutal priest he said, "Nay, parson, no harlot, but a married man and his wife, according unto God's ordinance; blessed be God for holy matrimony."

Good old Yeoman was then taken to the cage, and set in the stocks till it was day. There he found a poor man named John Dale, who had been sitting in the stocks three or four days for somewhat roughly upbraiding Newall and his curate while performing the Romish service in Hadleigh church.

In the cage Yeoman and Dale were kept till Sir Henry Doyle, the justice, came to Hadleigh. On his arrival, Newall urged him strongly to send both the heretics to prison. "Sir Henry Doyle," says Foxe, "earnestly laboured and entreated the parson to consider the age of the men and their poor estate, they were persons of no reputation, nor preachers, wherefore he would desire him to let them be punished a day or two, and so to let them go—at the least John Dale, who was no priest, and therefore seeing he had so long sitten in the cage, he thought it

PUNISHMENT OF THE STOCKS.—*(From Foxe's "Acts and Monuments.")*

punishment enough for this time. When the parson heard this, he was exceedingly mad, and in a great rage called them pestilent heretics, unfit to live in the commonwealth of Christians. Wherefore I beseech you, Sir, quoth he, according to your office, defend holy Church, and help to suppress these sects of heresies, which are false to God, and thus boldly set themselves to the evil example of others against the Queen's gracious proceedings. Sir Henry Doyle, seeing he could do no good in the matter, and fearing also his own peril if he should too much meddle in this matter,

made out the writ, and called the constables to carry them forth to Bury Gaol. So they took Richard Yeoman and John Dale pinioned, and bound them like thieves, set them on horseback, and bound their legs under the horses' bellies, and so carried them to the gaol at Bury, where they were bound in irons; and for that they continually rebuked Popery, they were thrown into the lowest dungeon, where John Dale, through sickness of the prison and ill-treatment, died in prison, whose body, when he was dead, was thrown out, and buried in the fields. He was a man of forty-six years of age, a weaver by his occupation, well-learned in the Holy Scriptures, faithful and honest in all his conversation, stedfast in his confession of the true doctrine of Christ set forth in King Edward's time; for the which he joyfully suffered prison and chains, and from this worldly dungeon he departed in Christ to eternal glory, and the blessed paradise of everlasting felicity."

Richard Yeoman, after the death of John Dale, was sent to Norwich Gaol, where after strait and evil keeping he was examined of his faith and religion. Boldly and constantly the godly old minister declared and confessed himself to be of the faith and confession set forth by the late king of blessed memory—and from that confession he would never vary. Being required to submit himself to the holy father, the Pope, "I defy him," quoth he, "and all his detestable abominations. I will in no wise have to do with him, nor anything that appertaineth to him." The chief articles objected to him, were on the subject of his marriage, and the sacrifice of the mass. Wherefore when he continued stedfast in confession of the truth, he was condemned, degraded, and not only burnt, but most cruelly tormented in the fire.

In too many places where the martyrs of our glorious Reformation suffered, their names have been long forgotten. It is not so at Hadleigh. There the name of Rowland Tayler is still familiar as a household word. He was truly one of those remarkable men whom the Lord God has raised up from time to time to fight the good fight of faith in the fore-front of the battle, a man who might be classed in the list of those warriors, as one of the three mightiest was among David's captains. He would have said with the Psalmist, "Though an host should encamp against me, my

heart shall not fear." Never did his dauntless and masculine courage forsake him. When summoned by Gardiner to appear before him in London, and entreated by his Hadleigh friends to seek safety in instant flight, "Flee you," he replied, stoutly, "I am fully determined, with God's grace, to go before the Bishop, and to tell him to his beard that he doth naught. Our Almighty Father will hereafter raise up teachers of His people, who shall instruct them with much more fruit and diligence than I have done. God will never forsake His Church, though now for a time He trieth and correcteth us, not without just cause. As for me, I am fully persuaded that I shall never be able to render such effective service to my gracious Lord, and that I shall never have so glorious a calling as at this present time."

And what he said he would do, he did. The savage chancellor, after calling him knave, traitor and heretic, exclaimed, "Thou villain, how darest thou look me in the face, for shame: knowest thou not who I am?" "Yes, my Lord," said Rowland Tayler, "*I do* know who you are; you are Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester and Lord Chancellor; yet but a mortal man I trow. How dare you, for shame, look any Christian man in the face; seeing you have forsaken the truth, denied our Saviour Christ, and His word, and done contrary to your own oath and writing." Thus also when, after a long confinement in prison, he was brought before ten of the Popish bishops, and condemned by them, instead of quailing before them, he boldly exhorted them to repent for bringing the realm from Christ to antichrist, from light to darkness, and from verity to vanity; and when he came out from their presence and found an immense crowd pressing forward to see him, "God be thanked, good people," were his fearless words, "I am come away from them undefiled; and I will confirm the truth with my blood."

In his last will and testament this bold and stedfast witness to the truth wrote: "I say to my dear friends of Hadleigh, and to all others who have heard me preach, that I depart hence with a quiet conscience, as touching my doctrine; for which I pray you thank God with me. For I have, after my little talent, declared to others those lessons which I gathered out of God's book, the blessed Bible. Therefore, if I or an angel from

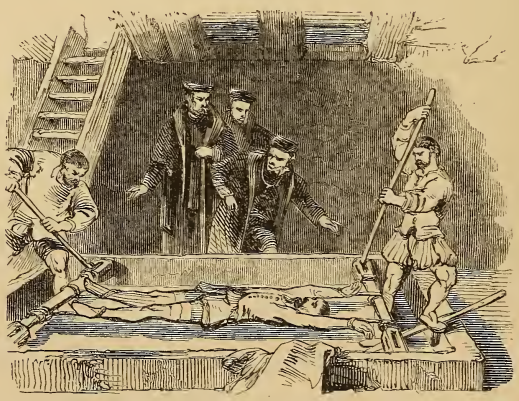
heaven should preach to you any other gospel than that ye have received, God's great curse upon that preacher.

"Beware, for God's sake, that ye deny not God, neither decline from the word of faith, lest God decline from you, and so ye everlastingly perish. For God's sake, beware of Popery; for though it appear to have in it unity, yet the same is in vanity, and antichristianity, and not in Christ's faith and verity.

"The Lord grant all men His good and Holy Spirit, increase of His wisdom, increase of contemning the wicked world, increase of hearty desire to be with God, and the heavenly company, through Jesus Christ our only Mediator, Advocate, Righteousness, Life, Sanctification, and Hope. Amen, Amen. Pray, Pray. 'The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?' 'God is he that justifieth; who is he that can condemn?' 'In Thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me never be confounded.'

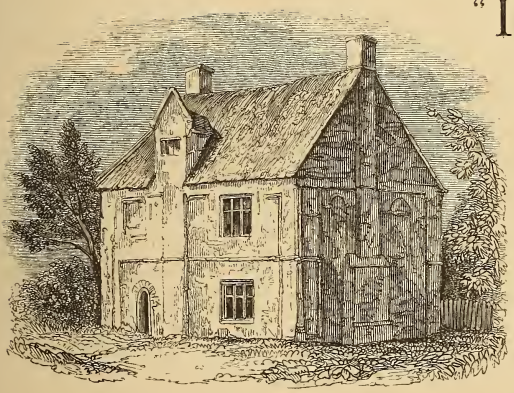
"ROWLAND TAYLER, departed hence with sure hope, without at all doubting of eternal salvation, I thank God my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ my certain Saviour. Amen.

"The 5th of February, Anno 1555."



PUNISHMENT OF THE RACK.—*(From Foxe's "Acts and Monuments.")*

NORWICH.



"I WILL bring the blind," saith the Lord, by the prophet Isaiah,* "by a way which they knew not." This Scripture found a striking illustration in the case of a learned and elegant scholar of the University of Cambridge some centuries ago. After having studied both civil and canon law, and having taken his degree as a Bachelor of Law, his mind was drawn to the study of divinity. But he had no guidance beyond the dim twilight of his own understanding, and the false light of Popish teachers. He was a man of peculiarly sensitive mind and tender conscience, and his meek spirit became wounded and depressed under a keen sense of unworthiness and inability to keep the law of God. In answer to his anxious enquiries, he was directed to be diligent in outward observances, in watchings and fastings, in mortifying the body with penances, and in all those bodily exercises which are enjoined so rigorously by the corrupt and fallen Church of Rome.

About this time the New Testament of Erasmus fell into his hands. He had heard its style commended, and bought the book. He was charmed

* Isaiah xlii. 16.

by the elegant Latin in which it was written. It was not the inspired truths, now, for the first time, presented to him, that engaged his attention, but the graceful form in which those truths were conveyed. But it pleased God to make His own word the quick and powerful sword of the Spirit to the heart of the learned, yet ignorant, reader, and then to pour in its healing balm by the same word which had pierced and wounded him.

The Scripture plan of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ and Him crucified, was now first revealed to him by the Holy Spirit. The place where he was reading was one of the most important and encouraging passages in the whole range of the written word. It was the first chapter of the first Epistle of Paul to Timothy, at the fifteenth verse, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." But let us hear his own account of the matter:

"But at the last, I heard speak of Jesus, even then when the *New Testament* was first set forth by Erasmus; which when I understood to be eloquently done by him, being allured rather for the Latin than for the word of God (for at that time I knew not what it meant), I bought it, even by the providence of God, as I do now well understand and perceive: and at the first reading (as I well remember) I chanced upon this sentence of St. Paul (Oh most sweet and comfortable sentence to my soul!) in his first Epistle to Timothy, and first chapter: 'It is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be embraced, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief and principal.' This one sentence through God's instruction and inward working, which I did not then perceive, did so exhilarate my heart, being before wounded with the guilt of my sins, and being almost in despair, that immediately I felt a marvellous comfort and quietness, insomuch, that my bruised bones leaped for joy.

"After this the Scripture began to be more pleasant to me than the honey or the honeycomb; wherein I learned that all my travail, all my fasting and watching, all the redemption of masses and pardons being done without trust in Christ, which only saveth his people from their sins; these, I say, I learned to be nothing else but even (as St. Augustine saith)

a hasty, or swift running out of the right way, or else, much like to the vesture made of fig-leaves, wherewithal Adam and Eve went about to cover themselves, and could never before obtain quietness and rest, until they believed in the promise of God, that Christ the seed of the woman should tread upon the serpent's head. Neither could I be relieved or eased of the sharp stings and bitings of my sins, before I was taught of God that lesson which Christ speaketh of in the third of John: 'Even as Moses exalted the serpent in the desert, so shall the Son of Man be exalted, that all which believe on him should not perish, but have life everlasting.'"

And now did Bilney implicitly obey the Divine injunction, "Arise! shine!" The word that bade him arise from the darkness and the shadow of death in which he had been lying, bade him go forth with its light in his hand to enlighten others. Blameless and harmless as a child of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, and shining as a light in the world, he held forth the word of life, and wherever he went he led others to rejoice in its light. From his childhood he had been brought up at Cambridge, and was entered at Trinity Hall;* there the scene of his first labours in the extension of the truth was laid. Good Master Stafford, the public lecturer on Scripture at the University, may have been one of his converts, as well as his earliest coadjutor. Latimer and Barnes were undoubtedly two of the first-fruits of his quiet labours. His way of proceeding there, though not a common, was a very simple one, and the extraordinary success that attended it, proved that it was an eminently good one. He singled and sought out the individual, and obtained a private interview, and then, when they were quite alone, he spoke first of the goodness of God to his own soul. He set forth with all gravity and gentleness the dealings of God with himself, and probably while his thoughts burned within him at the remembrance of that glorious Scripture which had entirely subdued his own heart, he preached to his companion Jesus coming into the world to save even the chief of sinners, and rejoicing with all His hosts of angels over the one sinner that re-

* This college was rebuilt at the end of the seventeenth century, but the hall is on its original site.

penteth. Few turned away from these appeals of the blessed Master Bilney. His system of religion was not only pure truth, but it was peculiarly spiritual, experimental, and practical. Like Paul he planted, but like Apollos he also watered; indeed the office in the church for which he seemed peculiarly fitted was that of "him who watereth." His instructions were like the quiet dew, or the gentle rain upon the tender grass.

TRINITY HALL, CAMBRIDGE.

He appears to have had no taste for public disputations, nor did he ever meddle with politics; but with quiet and unwearied perseverance, he gave himself up to that department of the work for which he was peculiarly qualified.

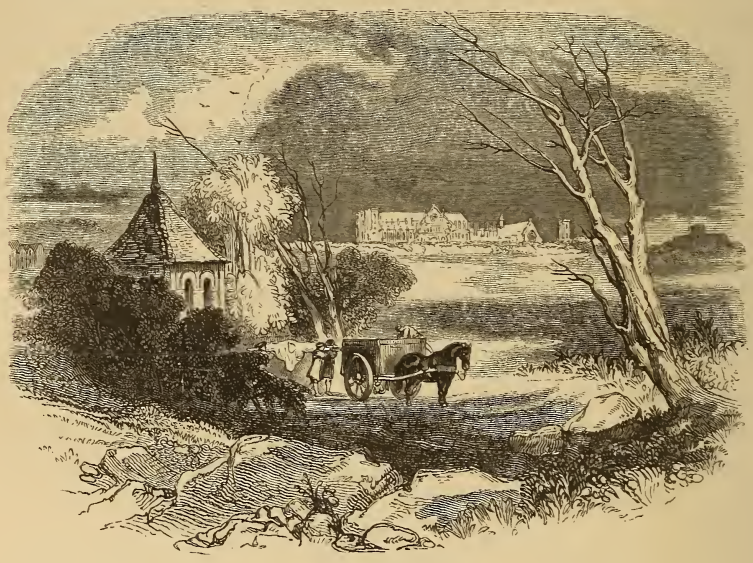
Among others who owed to him, under God, their first religious impressions, Lambert must not be forgotten, who was one of Bilney's most

distinguished pupils. "He was once," says Foxe, "a mass-priest in Norfolk, and afterwards a martyr in London." The first introduction of the principles of the Reformation, at the sister university of Oxford, may also be traced to Bilney, for the party of Scripturists transferred by Wolsey in 1524 to his new college at Oxford, were many of them the friends and followers of Bilney. Frith was one of them, and Clark their leader was a man of like spirit to the blessed Bilney.

After labouring for some time with wonderful success at Cambridge, Bilney sought for a season a new sphere of action. He left Stafford and Latimer with Barnes and some others at Cambridge, and went forth into Norfolk and Suffolk, journeying from place to place, and preaching wherever he went. Ipswich and Hadleigh appear to have been two of the towns in which he laboured longest, and with most success. In the former town, the churches in which he preached were St. George's and Christchurch. Gentle as he was in private, he was a bold unflinching advocate and expounder of Protestant truths as a preacher, and his plain and faithful protest against error, gave such intolerable offence, that he was twice torn from the pulpit. But the people came in crowds, even out of the country, to hear him, and the principles which he taught took deep root, not only in the town but in the surrounding country.

Hadleigh, as we have already seen, was one of the first towns in all England that embraced the truth, so that instead of a population of clothiers, it rather seemed to be filled with devout and learned clerks, and the instrument under God of this extraordinary work was the godly and zealous Bilney. But though not more than a year and a half or two years were spent by Bilney in this itinerating work through Norfolk and Suffolk, his labours were blessed of God in no common degree, his work of planting and watering was in simple accordance with the truth as it is in Jesus, and God accordingly gave the increase to it. The seed sown took root downward and bore fruit upwards. He appears to have been the first man who went forth, after the generation of the poor priests had died away, as a missionary from place to place, according to Wycliffe's plan. His deep humility, his thorough knowledge of Scripture, his talents as a preacher, the unspotted purity of his life, and the peculiar sweetness

of his disposition, endued him with singular wisdom in winning souls to Christ. "There never was a more innocent and upright man in all England than he was," says honest John Foxe; "he was given to good letters, very fervent and studious in the Scriptures, as appeared by his



OLD PEST HOUSE.

sermons, his converting of sinners, his preaching at the lazar cots,* wrapping them in sheets, helping them to what they wanted, if they would convert to Christ; laborious and painful to the desperates, a preacher to the prisoners and comfortless, a great doer in Cambridge, and a great

* The lazar cots, or pest-houses, are still found in some towns of England, at a little distance from all the other dwellings. Though no longer needed or used for their intended purpose they still retain the name. The two old stone pest-houses still remain at the upper end of Hadleigh. Here, doubtless, Bilney preached to the poor inmates, fearless of the infection, tenderly waiting upon them, and doing many an office of love for them, while he spoke to them of that good and gracious Master whom he served, and entreated them to cry to him for spiritual healing in the words of the leper of old, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;" telling them also of the reply of Jesus, "I will, be thou clean."

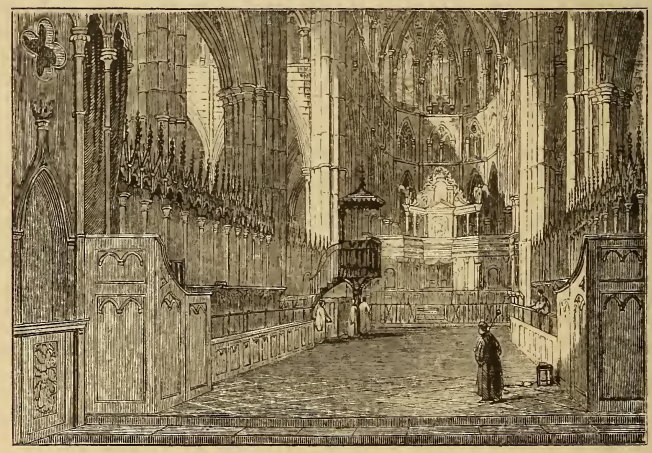
preacher in Norfolk and Suffolk: and at last, in London, he preached many notable sermons." When leaving Cambridge on his missionary tour, Bilney had taken with him one of his converts, Master Thomas Arthur, and with the same companion, on leaving Suffolk, he took his journey to London, and from thence to Willesden and Greenwich. He preached many sermons in London, and the report of one of these sermons at St. Magnus, in which he boldly protested against the new idolatrous rood lately set up there, caused so great a sensation, that he and Arthur were apprehended, and summoned before Bishop Tonstall, who committed them to the Coal-house, from whence they were removed to the Tower.

In whatever manner Bilney attacked the rood at St. Magnus Church, we have the concurrent testimony of an enemy and a friend, as to the spirituality of Bilney's sermons. Brusierd, a priest of Ipswich, who was a violent opposer of his preaching, charges him in one of his conversations with him with being like "one rapt to the third heaven of high mysteries." "What a ridiculous thing it is," says the scoffing and carnal-minded priest, "for a man to look so long upon the sun that he can see nothing else but the sun." The same priest complains of his vehement violence in preaching, but praises at the same time his towardly disposition. Pybas of Colchester, in his examination, as recorded by Strype, declares of Bilney's preaching, that he had heard him preach at Ipswich, and that after he had heard him, he published and declared that sermon to divers persons, and set it forth as much as in him was. He adds, "that Master Bilney's sermon was most spiritual, and better for his purpose and opinions than any that ever he heard in his life."

During his abode in London the lovely spirit of Bilney shone forth with new lustre. For a year and a half he commonly took but one meal a day, and would carry his dinner and supper to some prison, where he would give them to any poor prisoner whom he went to exhort to repentance.

After Bilney and Arthur was arrested, they were not only brought before the Bishop of London, but before Cardinal Wolsey, at Westminster. Wolsey, however, saw them himself but once, and turned them over to

his commissioners, who were some of the bishops. The prisoners were found guilty; Arthur at once recanted, and no further mention is made of his name. Bilney refused to recant, and continued for three days stedfast to his refusal, but at length, overcome by the solicitations of many of his friends, and the persuasions of Tonstall, his resolution gave way. He consented to abjure his faith, and to submit himself to the sentence which should be pronounced upon him. Tonstall showed some kindness to him; for the usual punishment of branding the heretic with a hot iron



CHOIR OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

was dispensed with, but Bilney was condemned to walk bare-headed before the procession in St. Paul's Cathedral on the following day, bearing a faggot on his shoulder, and thus to stand all the sermon-time before the preacher at St. Paul's Cross. To all this the poor bewildered prisoner consented, overcome for the time by the sophistries of his advisers, and by the fear of death. Alas! who would not weep over the fall of so humble and holy a disciple, yielding for a little time to those infirmities, which are so natural to the best and most faithful of men. Surely the gracious Jesus whose truth he thus lamentably betrayed, looked down in pity upon his weak and erring follower. Well were His compassionate words to

Peter applicable to Bilney, "Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat, but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

Bilney returned to Cambridge, and was welcomed with joy by his loving friends, but his heart was overwhelmed with grief. Like the apostle who denied his Lord, he sorrowed and suffered with no common sorrow and suffering. They sought to comfort him, but he refused to take comfort. He never held up his head; he answered not when spoken to, even by his dearest friends. "For a whole year," we are told, "he was in such anguish and agony, that nothing did him good, neither eating nor drinking, nor any communication of God's word. He thought that all the whole Scriptures were against him, and sounded to his condemnation." "I many a time conversed with him," said Latimer, who was his familiar friend, "but all things whatsoever any man could allege to his comfort seemed to him to make against him." "I knew a man," said Latimer again, "Bilney, that blessed martyr of God, who what time he had borne his faggot, and was come again to Cambridge, had such conflicts within himself (beholding this image of death) that his friends were afraid to let him be alone. They were fain to be with him day and night, and to comfort him as they could: but no comfort would serve, and as for the comfortable places of Scripture, to bring them unto him, it was as though a man had run him through the heart with a sword." Who can wonder that such should have been the state of so simple and sincere a child of God as this fallen saint assuredly was. How would he recall, with the bitterness of death, all his former exhortations, all his tender truthful pleadings with others, and the recorded experience of all the mercies of his Lord to him, on which he had dwelt so sweetly and so eloquently to them. He had given the direct lie to the whole argument of his former discourse and past consistency of life and conduct. He had been a traitor to his most dear Lord, and a deceiver towards every convert that he had made. But this anguish of spirit in Bilney was not without its use to his beloved companions. He was reading them a lesson they would never forget, and preparing and strengthening them, by the warning which his state presented, for the short-lived bodily sufferings which many

of them were afterwards to endure at the stake and in the flames of martyrdom.

But though "heaviness may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning." The heavy night of Bilney's sorrow was about to clear away, and a new and brighter day than he had ever seen was soon to dawn upon him. "I have prayed for thee," said his gracious Lord. And he who called the broken-hearted Peter by name, did doubtless come to this poor sorrowing disciple who loved him so truly, and bewailed with such heartfelt sorrow his falling away from his stedfastness. When the servants of God sorrow after a godly sort not according to the sorrow of this world which worketh death, but unto a repentance not to be repented of, then it may be truly said, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted," then God will give them, according to his gospel promise, "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." By God's grace, and by the constant study of his blessed word, the spirit of the contrite Bilney at length revived. He who never breaks the bruised reed; He whom the poor penitent offender sought with the tears of a genuine repentance, said, Peace—and there was a great calm.

It was nearly two years after his fatal deed of recantation, that in the hall of his college—Trinity Hall—at ten o'clock at night, Bilney suddenly announced to his astonished friends he was about to take leave of them and of his beloved university for ever in this world. The cloud of his heavy affliction had quite passed away, and with a calm and smiling countenance and a cheerful voice, he bade them farewell, and told them that he should see them no more. Mild and gentle as he was, his mind was stedfast to the purpose he had formed, and he immediately departed.

They next heard of him in Norfolk, where he preached first privily in houses to confirm and strengthen the brethren and sisters, and also to confirm an anchoritess whom he had converted to Christ. He then proceeded to take the most public course of action. Regardless of danger, and desirous in the most decided way to undo as much as possible the effect of his sad fall upon that cause which was dearer to him than life;

he preached publicly in the fields, openly confessing his sin and beseeching his hearers to take warning from his base weakness, never to trust to human counsellors, nor to deny the truth, but to be rather ready and willing to lay down their lives. A charge was soon found against him, and made the handle for his apprehension—a strange charge for Christian men to take offence at. He had given a copy of Tindale's English New Testament, to the anchoritess at Norwich, and for this,

NORWICH CATHEDRAL.

Nixe, the Bishop of Norwich, threw him into prison to wait there till he had sent up to London for a writ to burn him.

All means were taken by the Popish party during his imprisonment, to prevail on him a second time to recant and to die in their opinions; the Bishop sent to him the best men that he could find, that they might prevail with him by their arguments and entreaties. But he had planted himself upon the rock of God's word, and continued unshaken and sted-

fast to the end. Stokes, an Augustine friar, however, remained disputing with him, till the writ came for his burning.

Saturday, which was market-day at Norwich, was appointed for the burning of Bilney. No man ever maintained a more calm and cheerful spirit even to the last. He had been degraded before Dr. Pelles the chancellor of the diocese, and then committed to the lay power and to the sheriffs of the city, one of whom, his friend Thomas Necton, to his great sorrow was forced to receive him as his prisoner, but absented himself at his execution.

He was from this time, owing to the orders of Necton, more kindly treated than he had been under the Bishop and the friars. On the Friday evening, previous to his death, many of his friends came to him to the Guildhall. They found him eating his supper with a cheerful heart and quiet mind; and one of them expressing how glad he was to see him thus heartily refreshing himself, so shortly before his heavy and painful departure, "Oh," said Bilney, "I follow the example of the husbandmen of the country, who having a ruinous house to dwell in, yet bestow cost as long as they may to hold it up, and so do I now to this ruinous house of my body, and with God's creatures, in thanks to Him, refresh the same as ye see."

While sitting with his friends in godly talk to their edification, some put him in mind, that though the fire which he should suffer the next day should be of great heat unto his body, yet the comfort of God's Spirit should cool it to his everlasting refreshing. To their astonishment, at this word, Bilney put his hand into the candle which burned before them, and feeling the heat said to them, "I feel by experience that fire is naturally hot, but yet I am persuaded by God's Holy Word, and by the experience of some, spoken of in the same, that in the flame they felt no heat, and in the fire no consumption; and I constantly believe, that howsoever the stubble of this my body shall be wasted by it, yet my soul and spirit shall be purged thereby; a pain for the time, whereon, notwithstanding, followeth joy unspeakable."

He then spoke at some length on the beginning of the forty-third chapter of Isaiah: "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee; I have called

thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passeth through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." In his own tender and pathetic manner, he spoke to them upon this great promise of God's word, so applicable at that time to himself; and to furnish as fitting an application at no very distant hour to some of them. So highly spiritual, and so deeply affecting were his simple words, and "some took such sweet fruit therein," says his biographer, "that they caused the whole said sentence to be fairly written in tables, and some in their books; the comfort whereof in divers of them, was never taken from them to their dying day." In the library of Corpus Christi College, at Cambridge, Bilney's Bible may yet be seen, and the passage above cited is there marked with his own hand. Truly a Divine hand had imprinted that inspired promise in characters of light upon his heart,—as the word that liveth and abideth for ever!

And now the morning of his execution had arrived, and Bilney came forth from his prison door in a layman's gown, with his sleeves hanging down, and his arms out, his hair hacked and mangled after a piteous fashion—which had been done when they degraded him and gave him over to the civil power—but with his small slight form erect, and his good and upright countenance calm with inward peace. As he appeared, one of his friends drew nigh, and gently prayed him in God's behalf to be constant, and to take his death as constantly as he could. With a quiet and mild countenance, Bilney replied to him: "Ye see when the mariner has entered his ship to sail on the troubled sea, how he for a while is tossed on the billows: but, in hope that he shall at length come to the quiet haven, he beareth in better comfort the perils which he feeleth. So am I now toward this sailing; and whatsoever storms I shall feel, yet, shortly after, my ship is in the haven, as I doubt not: desiring you to help me with your prayers to the same effect." Bilney had begun to experience the full comfort of that Scripture: "Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus

Christ." He passed along through the streets, giving much alms by the way, by the hand of a friend, and through the Bishop's Gate, which was then standing on the old bridge, and so over the Bishop's Bridge to the low valley under St. Leonard's Hill, called the Lollards' Pit, from the martyrdoms which had taken place on the spot. The name is found there no longer.

Here it was that Thomas Bilney came to die, a victim to the wicked policy of Rome; here he came to add another name to the glorious band of God's martyrs to the truth; here he stood, and here the preparations were made for the cruel death to which a savage bigotry had condemned this holy man. Let us not be told, I would say again and again, that these are the abominations of a former age, and belong rather to the times when Bilney lived, than to the party which passed sentence upon him,—no, these abominations might be more easily practised and more openly defended in a former age, but they are part of a system which does not change.

It is now a solitary spot, though in the outskirts of the busy city of Norwich, close to the gas-works and the railway-station. We see before us the castle and the cathedral, and the mass of houses, and hear the hum of active life—but this little plot of ground is truly as solitary a place as it ever was since the old city rose from its first foundations. The wild mignionette, and other field flowers peculiar to a chalky soil, flourish here untrodden and untouched but by a hand which, like my own, would carry away a memento from this *campo santo;* for here it was Bilney's ashes were mingled with the earth beneath our feet. It was no solitary spot on that memorable day, and, before and afterwards, the frequent martyrdoms which occurred there had given it the name of the Lollards' Pit.

On that sad morning the heights and the surrounding banks of the rude amphitheatre were covered by crowds of people, who had flocked hither to witness the last confession of the stedfast saint. Every sound was hushed as he lifted up his firm voice to address his parting words to the assembled people. He spoke to them with calmness of his death, and then he rehearsed the articles of his belief. Devoutly he raised his eyes and hands to heaven; and when he spoke of the incarnation of our blessed Lord,

he paused, and seemed to meditate within himself. On coming to the word "crucified," he humbly bowed himself and made great reverence. His address being ended, he put off his gown, and knelt down upon a little ledge projecting from the stake, which had been made that he might stand upon it to be better seen of the assembled multitude.

Thus he offered up his prayers in silence, but with an earnest upturned gaze, often raising his hands also in the fervency of his supplication. His private prayers being ended, he exclaimed aloud, in the words of the hundred and forty-third Psalm, "Hear my prayer, O Lord, consider my desire;" and the next verse he thrice repeated as one in deep meditation, "and enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified."

He then turned to the officers of justice and asked if they were ready. On receiving their reply, he put off his jacket and doublet, stood in his hose and shirt, and went to the stake. As he took his place upon the ledge, they fastened the chain around him. His beloved friend,* Dr. Warner, the parson of Winterton, whom he had chosen to attend upon him in his last moments, and who had accompanied him to the place of execution, now came forward to bid him farewell, but spake but few words for weeping, upon whom, adds Foxe, the said Thomas Bilney did most gently smile, and inclined his body to speak to him a few words of thanks, and the last were these, "O Master Doctor, feed your flock, feed your flock, that when the Lord cometh, He may find you so doing, and farewell, good Master Doctor, and pray for me." And so Warner departed without any answer, sobbing and weeping. The sweetness of Bilney's disposition even towards his enemies, showed itself at this trying hour; for when a party of friars, who had been maliciously present at his examination and degradation, said to him, "O Master Bilney, the people be persuaded that we be the causers of your death, and have procured the same, and they will withdraw their charitable alms of us all, except you declare your charity towards us and discharge the matter"—the gentle

* Dr. Warner had been a Scripture Lecturer at Cambridge. Winterton is on the sea-coast of Norfolk, between Yarmouth and Happisburgh, and is distinguished for its noble church-tower.

saint turned to the people, and said with a loud voice, "I pray you, good people, be never the worse to these men, for my sake, as though they were the authors of my death,—it was not they!"

The faggots and reeds were now heaped around him, the reeds were set on fire, and a fierce flame burst forth; but though it disfigured his face, the flame was blown away from him by the violence of the wind, which was unusually strong. For a short time he stood scorched, but unburnt by the fire, at times beating his breast, or lifting up his hands and saying sometimes, Jesus, and sometimes Credo (I believe). Thrice the flame departed, and returned. At length the faggots burnt fiercely, and then he gave up the ghost. And thus was Bilney faithful unto death.

There have been very few like this gentle loving disciple of our blessed Lord, of a spirit at once so meek and so dauntless, so tender and so firm, —few have united such a sweet persuasiveness in private intercourse, with such a burning zeal in his public preaching of the word. There was in Bilney the humility of a child and yet the boldness of a lion.

MANCHESTER, CAMBRIDGE, AND LONDON.

BLESSED are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven!

We sometimes see in this proud and contentious world the saint-like characters described in these words; and in their unwavering faith and in the undisturbed peace of their inward spirit—which shine through their fleshly tabernacle like the pure flame shining through a lamp of crystal—we may discern the bright assurance that the kingdom of heaven is within them, that its inextinguishable light, already kindled in their hearts, is burning there like the lamp of the wise virgins: to shine, not only while they wait and watch for the Bridegroom's coming, but to burn with its brightest fullest radiance when at the midnight they obey the sudden summons, go out to meet their Lord, and go in with him to the marriage.

John Bradford was one of these saint-like characters. We weep over the story of other martyrs; but while we read the record of his course of suffering—and cruel indeed his sufferings were—our tears cease to flow, and as we consider his life and death, our sympathy is insensibly awakened rather to rejoice with one that rejoiced, than to weep with one that wept.

John Bradford was born in Manchester, soon after the year 1510, of respectable parents. In his early manhood he forsook the worldly calling

upon which he had first entered as secretary to Sir John Harrington, one of the treasurers of King Henry the Eighth, and his son Edward the Sixth.

He had, doubtless, served his earthly master, not with eye-service, but as the servant of the Lord; but he desired and sought a calling, where, as the minister of the sanctuary, he might wholly serve God, and proclaim to others, that gospel of grace and peace, which had filled his own soul with gladness. It seems that he received his first serious impressions under one of Latimer's powerful exhortations. His conscience being awakened by God's word and Spirit, he saw at once in its true light some acts of injustice in his past life, by which, however, he had not advanced his own interests, but those of his employer. He appealed to him to make restitution; but finding that the appeal was fruitless, he took it upon himself to do so, though he was obliged to give up his own patrimony in consequence.

Bradford left London on resigning his employment for the University of Cambridge, where he soon became the friend and associate of the wise and holy men of the reformed faith who were then residing there. He was made a fellow of Pembroke Hall, and, by the advice of Martin Bucer, was induced to take orders sooner than he had at first intended. In reply to Bucer's solicitations, Bradford had urged that he was too unlearned to preach, but Bucer would take no denial; "If thou hast not fine manchet bread," was his pithy reply, "yet give the poor people barley bread, or whatsoever else the Lord hath committed unto thee."

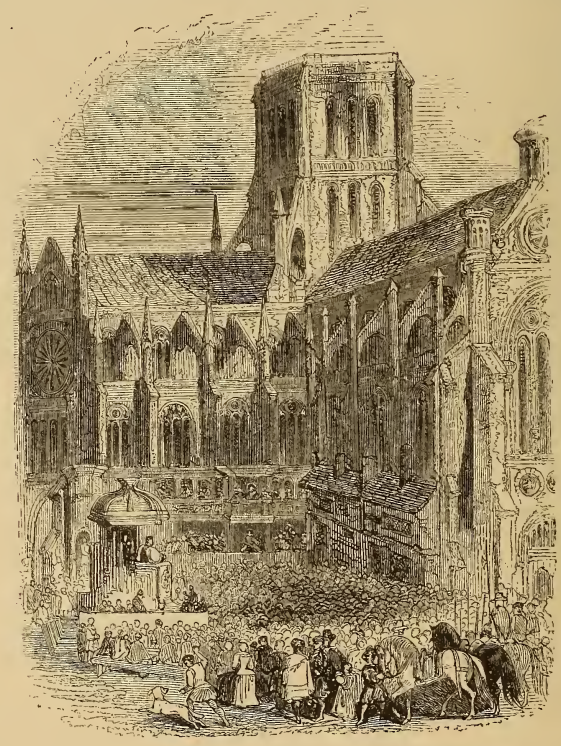
Bishop Ridley, who was Warden of Pembroke Hall, ordained Bradford deacon, kindly dispensing with some superstitious observances to which he had objected in the ordination service, as it was then administered; and giving him a licence to preach. He made him also a Prebend of St. Paul's Cathedral.

"In this preaching office," says Foxe, "by the space of three years, how faithfully Bradford walked, how diligently he laboured, many parts of England can testify. Sharply he opened and reproved sin, sweetly he preached Christ crucified, pithily he impugned heresies and errors, earnestly he persuaded to godly life. After the death of blessed young King Edward the Sixth, when Queen Mary had gotten the crown, still continued Bradford diligent in preaching, until he was unjustly deprived both of his office and

liberty by the queen and her council. To the doing whereof (because they had no just cause) they took occasion to do this injury, for such an act as among Turks and Infidels would have been with thankfulness rewarded, and with great favour accepted, as indeed it did no less deserve."

I stand in silent meditation in the busiest thoroughfare of the busiest city of the world. The rolling carriages, the rattling carts, the hurrying throng of foot-passengers, and the loud ceaseless hum that rises on every side are scarcely heeded by me. My mind is occupied with the thoughts of bygone days. The grand and magnificent cathedral which now stands before me has disappeared, and in the place of the gigantic dome, and the beautiful towers and stately porticoes of its Corinthian architecture, and all the stately proportions of the wide-spread edifice, the old cathedral of St. Paul's has arisen—a noble gothic pile of vast dimensions. I see the Lollards' Tower surmounting the cathedral walls on the west, and here, on the eastern side, stands Paul's Cross. A preacher enters its stone pulpit, and the crowd stand in silence listening to his sermon ; but soon a murmur rises and spreads among the throng. The preacher has not only given his undisguised commendation to popish errors, he has dared to cast aspersions on the name of the young and godly Edward the Sixth, whose beloved memory is embalmed in the hearts of the hearers, and the murmurs of the people have burst forth into a tumult, and the shouts of angry voices are mingled with groans and hisses. Vainly does the lord mayor exert his authority to restrain the rage of the people, vainly the fierce and bloated Bishop Bonner scowls and blusters. The burst of popular indignation yields to no such interposition, a dagger is hurled at the preacher. In another moment he has withdrawn himself, and the pulpit is occupied by one who has only to be seen to calm the tumult with his presence. "Bradford, Bradford ! God save thy life, Bradford !" is the cry which now resounds, and gradually the storm of popular rage subsides, as every eye is fixed upon that calm sweet countenance, where the eloquent blood gives its glow to the cheek and lip of the speaker, as with mild energy he pleads with the people, and gravely commands them to disperse, and retire peaceably to their houses. It was at the entreaty of Bourne, the preacher who had given such offence, that John Bradford had come forward. He

had been standing behind him, and the dagger that was aimed at Bourne had rent his sleeve and well nigh wounded him. But Bradford did more than interpose from the pulpit to save the preacher's life. Yielding a second time to his urgent desire, he with Rogers guarded Bourne till he



PREACHING AT ST. PAUL'S CROSS.*

reached the schoolmaster's house, which was next to the pulpit, in safety, Bradford keeping close behind him, and shadowing him with his gown from the people, and so he brought him in safety away.

The greater part of the multitude had by that time quitted the spot,

* The spire, which appears in the picture of St. Paul's on page 35, was destroyed by fire in the year 1561.

but many still lingered about, burning with anger at the attack which Bourne had made upon the king, who had been so deservedly loved by his people. "Bradford, Bradford," said one gentleman, as they passed by, "thou savest him that will help to burn thee. I assure thee, that if it were not for thee, I would run him through with my sword."

The same Sunday, in the afternoon, Bradford preached at the Bow Church in Cheapside, and notwithstanding a private warning which he received, not to run so great a risk with the people who were still deeply incensed, he did not scruple with godly faithfulness to rebuke them sharply for their seditious outbreak.

Is it to be credited, that from the conduct of Bradford on this occasion, a serious charge was brought against him of sedition, and of taking upon himself to govern the people. "They could repress the rage of the populace in a moment," said the queen, "doubtless they set it on." Within three days of that same Sunday, he was taken into custody, and committed to the Tower, to answer before the council. His enemies did indeed prove themselves to be put to a hard shift to find any cause of accusation against him, when they were forced to ground their charge upon a deed of Christian love.

He had perilled his life, and exerted the influence which God had given him over the people, to whom he had preached the Gospel in all love and faithfulness for three years, in order to save a fellow-creature from a violent death: and for this he was called to account as a criminal. Well did he exemplify the words of the apostle: "If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye, for it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing than for evil doing." He was removed from prison to prison during the next fifteen months; but wherever he went, it was with him as with the godly Daniel, God brought him into favour and tender love with those around him. And thus prison was scarcely a prison to this gentle follower of Christ, for he inspired his very gaolers with so perfect a confidence in his truth and uprightness, that he had licence, upon his promise to return, often to go in and out; and during his imprisonment, both in the King's Bench and in the Poultry Compter, he was permitted to preach twice a day continually, until sickness prevented him. In his chamber,

the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was often administered, and many godly persons were admitted to be present on such occasions; so that his chamber was often crowded with Christian worshippers and hearers. Preaching, reading, and prayer was all his occupation, and his continual study was upon his knees. "In the midst of dinner," says Foxe, "he often used to muse with himself, having his hat over his eyes, from whence came commonly plenty of tears, dropping on his trencher: very gentle he was to man and child, and in so good credit with his keeper, that at his desire in an evening, he had licence, to return again that night, to go without any keeper to visit one that was sick. Neither did he fail his promise, but returned to his prison again, rather preventing his hour than breaking his fidelity: so constant was he in word and in deed."

The description of his person has been given by the honest old historian, and our readers may like to look upon it even as they would upon a painter's portrait, for his outward frame seems to have been a fitting tenement for his inward spirit. "Of personage, he was somewhat tall and slender, spare of body, and of a faint sanguine colour, with an auburn beard." We see him, keeping this description in our minds, in his first interview with the wily Lord Chancellor, Gardiner, and the other commissioners, in the council chamber of the Tower of London,—as he rose up from kneeling down on his knee, in token of respect towards the council, when the lord chancellor had bidden him to stand up. Whilst he stood there, we are told that Gardiner fixed his eyes upon him with a settled searching stare, as if he would have "belike over-faced him" by earnestly looking upon him. But Bradford shrank not from the searching look. "He gave him no place, but he ceased not to look stedfastly on the lord chancellor still continually, save that once he cast up his eyes to heavenward, sighed for God's grace, and so over-faced him."

The first charge brought against him was his seditious interposition for Bourne, at Paul's Cross, for which he had been thrown into prison, but this was too absurd for them to make much of it. A new accusation had arisen during his long continued abode in prison. The Earl of Derby complained that he had done more harm by his letters and treatises

written from his prison, than by all his preaching and proceedings when at large. Bradford might indeed have said with the great apostle, when referring to the influence that he had exerted during his confinement in prison: "The things which happened unto me have fallen out rather to the furtherance of the gospel, so that many of the brethren of the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear, and I therefore do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." Those letters and papers are treasures to the Church of Christ, written as they were by so godly a man, and at the time when he might have said again with the apostle, "I am ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand." To these vain charges was added the old complaint and accusation—brought against almost every one of our noble and faithful Reformers—his true and scriptural doctrine concerning the Lord's Supper, as overturning the idolatrous and monstrous doctrine of the mass. With admirable wisdom—the wisdom of the serpent combined with the innocence of the dove—Bradford met the varied and subtle arguments of those who entered into discussion with him. He was not to be thrown off his guard, nor would he, however strongly urged, seek a conference with any man among them, being determined never to admit that his own faith was not settled, or that he needed any confirmation from discussion with them.

At last he boldly threw off all the guards and fences to which he had been compelled in such discussions, and manfully avowed his faith without fear of consequences. His answer must not be passed over. "Wilt thou have mercy?" was the question put to him. "I desire mercy with God's mercy," was his reply, "but mercy with God's wrath, God keep me from." He was condemned to die, and how finely is he described by Foxe when he received the announcement from the gaoler's wife—trembling and weeping while she made it—that his execution was to take place on the following day. Reverently raising his cap, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said: "I thank God for it. I have looked for the same for a long time, and therefore it cometh not now to me suddenly, but as a thing waited for every day and hour; the Lord make me worthy thereof."

During the previous night Bradford had been troubled by dreams in his sleep. He dreamed that he saw the chain which was to fasten his

body to the stake brought to the gate of the Compter, and that he should be taken the next day, which was Sunday, to Newgate, and thence on the Monday to the stake in Smithfield: so it actually happened to him.

After the time appointed for his execution had been communicated to him, he thanked the keeper's wife for her gentleness, and went at once to his chamber, taking with him the companion who had occupied that chamber with him; when there, he retired by himself alone, and continued a long time in prayer. Then returning to his companion, he put his papers into his hands and gave him some directions which he wished him to attend to after his death. He passed the rest of the night in prayer with his companion, and in conversing about his affairs. Some of his friends came to him at night, and with them he also prayed, with such unction and fervour, Foxe says, "so wonderfully, that it was marvellous to hear and see his doings."

He was to leave the Compter that night, but before he went, he made a farewell prayer, with many tears, and he put on the long white shirt, such as the martyrs wore at the stake, which a pious woman had made for him, to wear at his death, and then he prayed again, comparing the shirt to his wedding garment. On leaving his chamber he also prayed, and gave money to every servant and officer of the house, exhorting them to fear and serve God, and to eschew all evil. Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed earnestly that the Lord would give effect to the words he had spoken. Prayer seemed to be the element in which he lived; and thus he sought to realise at all times the presence of God, and to be ever in communion with his Lord. As he passed through the court of the prison, all the prisoners cried out to him, and bid him farewell with many tears.

It was toward midnight when he left the Compter on his way to Newgate. That time was probably chosen in the expectation that the streets would be empty, but they were thronged with a multitude of people, who came to see the man of God whom they loved, and gently they bade him farewell, and weeping, they prayed for him as he passed along: as gently, he bade farewell to them, praying most fervently for them in return. Here, through this busy street, the meek and faithful follower of the Lamb

went to the slaughter. How different the scene which rises before us as we stand here in silent and abstracted thought, while the mind wanders back along the stream of years to the Cheapside of those distant days; the strange old houses, with their carved and gabled fronts, their open shops and their projecting stories overhanging the causeway. Our countrymen and countrywomen of those days are about us—how different the fashion of their dress; the beards of the men, and the ruffs of the women,

CHEAPSIDE.—*(From an old engraving.)*

the long loose woollen gowns, the sleeved and straight-hanging mantles, the doublet and hose, the kirtle and the coif. Ah, there were hearts as true and as tender under that quaint attire as any in these so-called enlightened days—we doubt if a throng of more zealous lovers of God's word and of Christ's saints could be found at midnight crowding our modern Cheapside to bid farewell, and bless with broken voices, and with flowing tears, a sufferer for pure scriptural truth on his way to a martyr's death.

It had been given out that his execution would take place at four o'clock in the morning, doubtless in the expectation that the citizens of

London would not leave their beds at so early an hour, and that few if any spectators would be present. But that night was a sleepless night in London, and thousands and thousands of the people were about and stirring all night; and came pouring in streams along every avenue that led to Smithfield. "By four o'clock the crowd assembled was so dense and numerous, that it appeared to many who had gone up to the house-tops as if so great a multitude could not have been assembled at such an early hour unless almost by a miracle. Mrs. Honeywood, who died in 1620, used to relate that she went to witness this martyrdom, but the crowd was so great, that her shoes were trodden from her feet, and she was forced to return barefooted. The hours passed slowly away; it was eight o'clock before Bradford was led to execution."* At last he appeared, and in his usual saint-like dignity.

His stake-companion was a youth of nineteen years old, a poor apprentice named John Leaf, whose offence, the common one in those days, was his refusal to affirm that the bread in the eucharist was not bread but flesh. The dauntless boy, unable to write, when required to sign a paper setting forth the truths he held, pricked his hand with a pin, and sprinkling his blood upon the paper, he bade them take it to Bishop Bonner as a proof that he was ready to confirm his confession with his blood. He was the only companion of Bradford. The veteran in arms and the young and newly-enlisted soldier stood side by side in the battle-front, and received at the same time the crown of victory. They both fell on their faces to the ground in prayer, but were scarcely allowed a minute, for the sheriff was alarmed by the pressure of the crowd. The self-possession of Bradford seemed never to forsake him. He rose up and kissed the stake, and having put off his garments he addressed his last words of warning to the people: "O England, repent thee of thy sins; beware of idolatry; beware of false antichrists; take heed they do not deceive thee." The sheriff would not allow him to say more, but bade them tie his hands if he would not be quiet. "I am quiet," said the martyr; "God forgive you this, Master Sheriff." "If you have no better learning than that," said one of the men employed to make the fire, "you are but a fool, and had best

* *Days of Queen Mary*, by Stokes. Religious Tract Society.

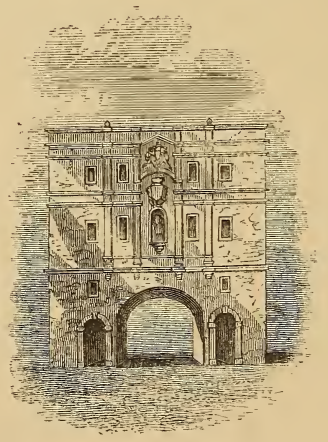
hold your peace." To these insulting words the gentle Bradford made no reply, but asked forgiveness of all men, and declared his forgiveness of all men. Then turning his head to his youthful fellow-sufferer, he spoke a few words of sweet encouragement to him, "Be of good comfort, brother, for we shall have a merry supper with the Lord this night." No words were afterwards heard from his lips but these as he embraced the reeds which were piled around him: "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto eternal salvation, and few there be that find it." And thus, added Foxe, they ended their mortal lives, most like two lambs, without any alteration of countenance, being void of all fear. No more words were heard by the bystanders, "but they saw that he endured the flame as a fresh gale of wind in a hot summer's day."

Nobly did Bradford thus bring into life and action his own words in his Treatise against the Fear of Death: "Embrace him," he writes, "make him good cheer, for of all enemies, he is the least. An enemy, said I, nay, rather of all friends he is the best, for he brings thee out of all danger of enemies, into that most sure and safe place of thy unfeigned Friend for ever. . . . Seeing it is the ordinance of God, and comes not but by the will of God, even to a sparrow, much more then unto us, who are incomparably much more dear than many sparrows; and since this will of God is not only just but also good, for he is our Father—let us, if there were no other cause but this, submit ourselves, our senses, and judgment, unto His pleasure, being content to come out of the room of our soldier-ship, whenever he shall send for us, by his pursuivant, Death."

Truth and love were the two distinctive features of Bradford's character. Those two chief graces and fruits of the Spirit were exquisitely combined in him, the pure and lofty grandeur of the one, with the sweetness and tenderness of the other: no one among his fellow-martyrs was more inflexible or more resolute in maintaining the truth, no one did so in a more kind and gentle spirit. Great efforts were made, and various ways were tried to bring over one so deservedly loved for his goodness, to the Romanists' side. Long and grievously did his opposers try his patience by protracted imprisonment. Their wisest and most skilful divines were sent to hold discussions with him, and winning and flattering words were

addressed to him; but he stood firm himself, and strengthened and cheered others to do the same. His influence was as extensive as it was extraordinary. He exhorted, warned, instructed, and comforted all with whom he personally associated, and all whom he could reach by his letters. Rowland Tayler and he were a mutual support to one another in prison.

Bishop Ferrar was at one time his companion in the King's Bench, and Bradford was, under God, the instrument of preventing his yielding to the persuasions of the papists when they had prevailed upon him to consent to receive the sacrament in one kind only. He was led to see his danger by the plain and faithful remonstrances of Bradford, and "would never after yield," says Foxe, "to be spotted with that papistical pitch." So effectually the Lord wrought by this worthy servant of his. Such an instrument was he in God's church, that few or none there were that knew him, but esteemed him as a precious jewel and God's true messenger.



CARMARTHEN, CARDIFF.

THE most sad and shameful day that ever dawned upon this fallen earth was yet the most glorious day that her children ever saw. A still more glorious day is yet to dawn, for He, who came in deep humility, who expired under the hands of his murderers, and departed in that human body in which he had yielded to death, and in which he had, by yielding, conquered death, will come again in His glory to sit upon the throne of his glory, to take possession of his kingdom, and to reign in righteousness. He will then come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe; and then will be the day of perfect glory for the Church triumphant. Still that day of unspeakable suffering and shame and death, was the most glorious day this earth has ever yet seen. It was the day of glory to the Church militant on earth—the day on which the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls became the great martyr of the Church. For He who then agonized and bled was God as well as man—God manifest in the flesh—the foundation, the rock, and the chief corner-stone of his house, which is the Church.

It was in like manner a glorious day for the reformed Church in this country, when her pastors became her martyrs—when the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishops of London, and of Gloucester, and of Wor-

cester, went forth in meek and resolute spirit to the stake and to the flames, choosing the reproach of Christ, and preferring rather to yield up their lives than to deny the faith. They kept the truth which God had committed to them, pure and unadulterated, and thus the blood of our martyrs was indeed the seed of the Church.

Wales had also her martyr-bishop, and we are now journeying to the western shores of our island, to the town of Carmarthen. The honoured name of Robert Ferrar, Bishop of St. David's has given a mournful interest

ROBERT FERRAR.

to the place where he suffered with unshaken faith and constancy for the love of Christ, and the pure creed of the Gospel.

It was in the market-place of Carmarthen, on the south side of the spot where the high cross once stood, that the bishop having been condemned and degraded by his false judge and accusers, was led forth to execution at the stake, and nobly gave up his life for the truth and the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But let us turn aside from this busy throng of buyers and sellers

crowding the market-place, to the venerable church, where he underwent those final examinations which issued in his death. Though now almost in the centre of the town, this church formerly stood without the walls of the ancient Carmarthen. It is said to have been a fine specimen of the Early English style of architecture, and was built in the form of a cross; but it has been altered and modernised, and of the old building, only the chancel, the nave, and the south transept are standing, and even here the modern windows have greatly changed the character of the edifice.

At another time you may hear the story of Sir Rhys ap Thomas, whose tomb is the most noted of the ancient monuments of this church. He fought under the Earl of Richmond at the battle of Bosworth Field, and is said to have slain Richard the Third with his own hand, and was made Knight of the Garter on the spot. Let us turn to another monument, that of Bishop Ferrar. This is the inscription:

Sacred

TO THE MEMORY OF

ROBERT FERRAR, D.D.

BISHOP OF ST. DAVID'S;

BURNT IN THE MARKET-PLACE OF CAERMARTHEN,

30TH MARCH, 1555,

FOR ADHERING TO THE PROTESTANT RELIGION.

"The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance."—Psalm cxii. 6.

But we will leave the town, and find some quiet spot where we may discourse together of that blessed man of God, Master Ferrar. I am a stranger here, but I have heard much of the beauties of the vale of the Towy. We have already caught some fine views of that noble river from the town, but if I mistake not, there is a pleasant lane leading from the high road which is now before us, and which will bring us to the point I wish to find. The ascent is steep; but the shadows are lengthening, and the slant sunbeams are flinging a golden radiance over every object—the

heat of the day is gone, and the delightful freshness of the cool evening breeze has succeeded. Yes, this must be the lane, it leads only to the little church of Llangonner. Now we have gained the summit of the hill. How lovely the view which bursts upon us! Well does it deserve the fame which has ranked it among the most beautiful valleys of this beautiful

CARMARTHEN CASTLE AND BRIDGE.

Wales. What luxuriant woods, what swelling hills rising on every side, how graceful the sweep of the shining river as it flows through the sweet valley beneath us, and what a noble object in the view is the town of Carmarthen, with its church towers and its ruined castle, and its old bridge of many arches spanning the broad stream, where that tall vessel with her

sails unfurled, and her light pennon floating in the breeze, wends her majestic way towards the sea.

It is with no overstrained fancy that we may picture to ourselves the good and simple-minded Bishop Ferrar leaving the town beneath us for such a spot as this—leaving behind him the din of slanderous tongues, and losing for a little while the disquietude of sorrowful thoughts, while gazing upon the natural beauties of this delightful scene. I see him wearing the broad hat and the flowing gown at which his malicious accusers love to rail, as marks of his folly. His little son is with him, looking with innocent smiles into his father's mournful face, and I hear the sweet tones of the child's voice, as he tries to draw his father's attention to the various objects which attract his own notice. And now he rests upon some pleasant bank, and opens the clasped volume, which he takes from his bosom, and bids the playful boy sit down beside him, and reads to him of the early years of that wise and holy Child who was found sitting among the doctors in the house of God both hearing them and asking them questions, while all who heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers, and who as he grew in stature also grew in grace, and in favour with God and man. And now all the cheerfulness of the boy is gone, while the father speaks to him of the sorrows and the sufferings of that child when he grew up to be a man; and tears are in the boy's eyes, as he hears how Jesus was wounded in the house of his friends, and how he went to the place of his execution, toiling and fainting beneath the ponderous cross to which they nailed his sacred hands and feet, and on which he died; but died breathing forth, in tender love and pardon, prayers of intercession to his heavenly Father for the wretched men who murdered him, and mocked and taunted him in his dying agonies. And still he speaks of Jesus with all the glowing love of his full heart, as rising from the grave in the power of God, and saving by his death every dying sinner that looks to him as his Saviour and his God; and as he tells of his going up through the clear air, even till a cloud had hidden him from the sight of those who stood below, the child looks up into the deep blue of the heavens above him, his eyes beaming with admiring love, as if expecting to behold the ascending form of the triumphant Redeemer.

One of the bitter charges brought against this holy martyr was, that he was a married man—a strange charge for that Church which has unduly exalted above his inspired brethren the only apostle whose wife is spoken of in Holy Scripture. One of the demands which were tauntingly made upon him, was that he should repudiate his wife, and renounce the bonds of his marriage vow. "You made a profession," said the insolent Gardiner, "to live without a wife." "No, my lord," replied Bishop Ferrar, "that I did never. I made a profession to live chaste—not without a wife." Another of the accusations brought against him, was, "that he used to whistle to his child, and that he said the boy understood his whistle when he was but three days old,"—and this absurd charge was gravely brought forward in court against him. He answered it in these beautiful words, "that he did use with gravity all honest loving entertainment of his child, to encourage him hereafter willingly, at his father's mouth, to receive wholesome doctrine of the true fear and love of God, and that he hath whistled to his child, but said not that the child understood him."

When Ferrar was called upon to appear before Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, in the company of Bishop Hooper, Master Rogers, Master Bradford, Master Sanders and others, he was not condemned with those noble martyrs, but remanded to prison again. He was afterwards closely questioned by Gardiner, and one of his examinations is given in the Acts and Monuments of Foxe, a notable specimen of overbearing insolence on the part of Gardiner, and more in the style of the bold and blustering Bonner than of his usually assumed smoothness. The manly and Christian spirit of Ferrar was not, however, to be intimidated by the violence of the chancellor. He stood his ground modestly, but firmly.

When Ferrar was in the King's Bench prison, he was sorely pressed by the papists to receive the sacrament in one kind only on Easter Sunday. He had yielded, and given his consent, after much persuasion, and was almost overcome to take, what would probably have proved the first downward step; but on Easter Eve, the very night before he was to have done this, Bradford, as we have already seen, was brought a prisoner to the King's Bench. With godly faithfulness he expostulated with Ferrar against such lamentable backsliding, and he was enabled to bring him

back to that holy stedfastness, from which never before or afterwards did he turn aside.

When these examinations were ended, Ferrar was sent down to Carmarthen to be brought before a commission, the authority of which he would not consent to acknowledge. It consisted of his former accusers, with the man who had been put as bishop in his place; and in this mind he continued during the first two citations which he was called upon to attend. He was again summoned, and then with much gentleness, he humbly submitted himself, and agreed to receive the charges that were brought forward against him, but required a copy of the several articles, and a reasonable time to answer them. Those articles he refused to subscribe, and we cannot wonder when we read them. Our only astonishment is that any men professing to believe the true articles of the Christian faith could have had the hardihood to bring them forward. In them "the bishop was required to renounce matrimony and to give up his wife. To grant the natural presence of Christ's body and blood in the sacramental elements of bread and wine. To acknowledge the mass to be a propitiatory sacrifice for the quick and dead. To agree that general councils lawfully congregated never did and never can err. To acknowledge that men are not justified before God by faith only; but that hope and charity are necessarily required to justification. That the Catholic (or rather Romish) Church, which only hath authority to expound Scripture, and to define controversies of religion, and to ordain things appertaining to public discipline, is visible, and like unto a city set upon a mountain, for all men to understand."

The Romish Church, at the time of the Reformation, has here furnished to us a valuable document, or witness, from her own confession, to her most deadly and pernicious errors; for all these articles are utterly repugnant to the word of God, and are the very errors and heresies which all sound and Bible Christians from that day to the present have solemnly protested against.

Ferrar had been promoted to the see of St. David's by the Duke of Somerset, when he was Lord Protector of England in the reign of Edward the Sixth; but on the fall and death of the Protector he had been first

summoned to answer numerous charges brought against him, as Foxe relates, by certain covetous canons of the Church. The martyrologist has given these several articles at full length, with the answers of the bishop, and an account of the various proceedings carried forward against him, and at the end of the tedious detail he adds, "And thus you have heard the first trouble of this blessed martyr of the Lord in King Edward's days, with the whole discourses thereof: which we thought the rather here to express, to give other good bishops warning to be more circumspect whom they should trust and have about them."

When Queen Mary came to the throne, new troubles arose to the persecuted bishop. He had been detained in London during the examination of the witnesses against him on the former charges, but graver accusations on points of doctrine were now brought, and his name is henceforth to be added to the devoted band of faithful confessors whose unflinching faith and pure doctrine on questions of vital importance brought them to the stake.

The Romanist bishop who occupied the see of St. David's, from which Ferrar had never been lawfully ejected, summoned the poor prisoner once more to appear before him, and demanded of him, for the last time, "whether he would renounce and recant his heresies, schisms, and errors, which hitherto he had maintained, and if he would subscribe to the Catholic articles otherwise than he had done before." Ferrar made his appeal from the pretended bishop to Cardinal Pole—but he did so in vain. He was excommunicated without delay as a heretic by the angry and violent man who occupied his place, and was delivered over to the secular power. He had been condemned on the 11th of March, 1555: on the 30th of the same month, which was the Saturday before Passion Sunday, he was led to the place where the stake was prepared for his burning. It was, as we have already seen, on the south side of the market-cross at Carmarthen. He was faithful to the last—and his constancy was tested in a remarkable manner. There came to him shortly before his death, a knight's son named Richard Jones, lamenting over the painfulness of the suffering he was about to endure. The martyr, strong in that strength which is made perfect in weakness, replied to

him, that if he should see him once to stir in the pains of his burning, he might then give no credit to his doctrine. Was there faith or presumption in this declaration? if the latter, it was surely pardoned—but we may trust it was not presumption, but faith which prompted this assured and confiding reply—faith in the very present help of the Lord his righteousness and his strength. The noble martyr stood motionless in his heavenly patience, holding up the stumps of the hands which he had held up from the first as if welcoming the Lord in the fire, while he continued praying to him for fresh supplies of strength and patience.

And so he continued, till a person named Gravitt, pitying, some have supposed, his protracted sufferings, dashed a violent blow with a staff upon his head, and he fell down lifeless into the flames. The descendants of this man are, I am told, still residing in the neighbourhood of Carmarthen. In the garden of the vicarage a large square stone is to be seen, handed down from vicar to vicar, on which the martyr is said to have stood. Such was the end of this godly bishop's mortal course. "He was, so far as we can see," said Soames, "a man of unsullied reputation, as well as of unshaken constancy."

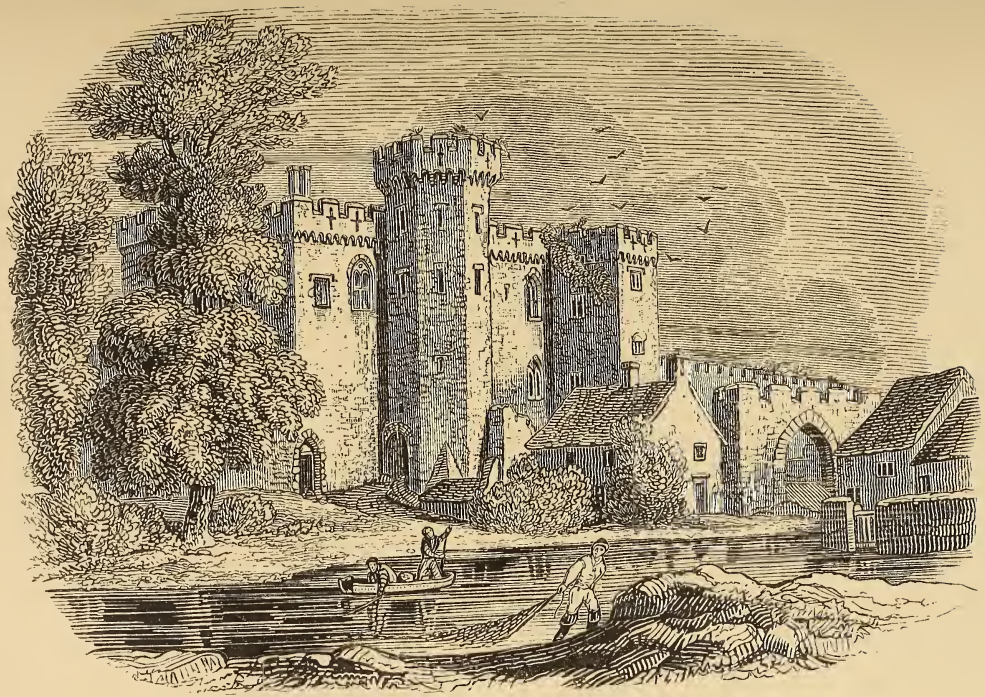
And now, my reader, we will leave Carmarthen and turn our steps toward the scene of another martyrdom which took place in the town of Cardiff, in the neighbouring county of Glamorgan. And here, not the shepherd, but one of the poor sheep of the flock fell under the cruel tyranny of those Romish heretics who ravaged the fair pastures of Christ's flock in the days of the infatuated Queen Mary.

We stand on the shore of the same waters in which the good old fisherman, Rawlins White, often launched his little bark. Perhaps on this very spot the old fisherman has often sat, mending his nets and listening to the sweet childish voice of that little son who was his constant companion when he went forth to speak to all who in the neighbouring villages would hear his testimony to the goodness and the grace of his great Redeemer. Here he may have received, like Peter, the fisherman of Galilee, his Master's call, and felt willing to leave his nets and all that he possessed to follow Him.

He had once been ignorant and superstitious, knowing nothing of the truth as it is in Jesus, but what he vainly sought for in the foolish legends and traditions of the corrupt Church of Rome; but he had heard of a purer faith, and had begun to discover the errors of that apostate Church, and to distrust the teaching to which he had hitherto blindly yielded, and he had become a diligent hearer and a great searcher out of the truth.

He had not had the advantage of education in his youth; he had not even learnt to read, and he was already much advanced in years—but he was heartily desirous to become acquainted with the word of God. The way that he took was a very simple one. Occupied during the whole of the day with his boats and his nets in working to maintain his wife and children, he sent his son to school to learn to read English; and every night throughout the year, so soon as the boy could read, the Bible was opened and a portion of the inspired word was read; and the father learnt from the lips of his child more and more of its wonderful truths. Thus he at length became a well-instructed scribe in the sacred volume. So delighted was he with the treasures of knowledge and wisdom which he thus acquired, that he went forth everywhere to endeavour to enrich others with the stores that he had received, and many were the souls that were brought out of the darkness of unbelief and sin by the blessing of God upon the teaching of the good old man. Everywhere his little son went with him, carrying the Holy Bible, and reading the passages to which the old man referred, and so extraordinary was his memory, so accurate his knowledge of the word of God, that he would often cite the book, the leaf, the very sentence in that volume in which he was quite unable to read a word.

After the death of the young and godly King Edward, Rawlins White found that it was necessary for him to be more circumspect in his proceedings; but his zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of his fellow-creatures burnt with even more intense fervour in the inmost depths of his heart. He felt even more forcibly the necessity of letting that light, which filled his own heart with its glorious effulgence, shine forth into the darkness around him. He did not cease to speak of Christ to his neighbours, but he was wisely guarded in his way of doing so; and



CARDIFF CASTLE (AS IT APPEARED IN 1775).

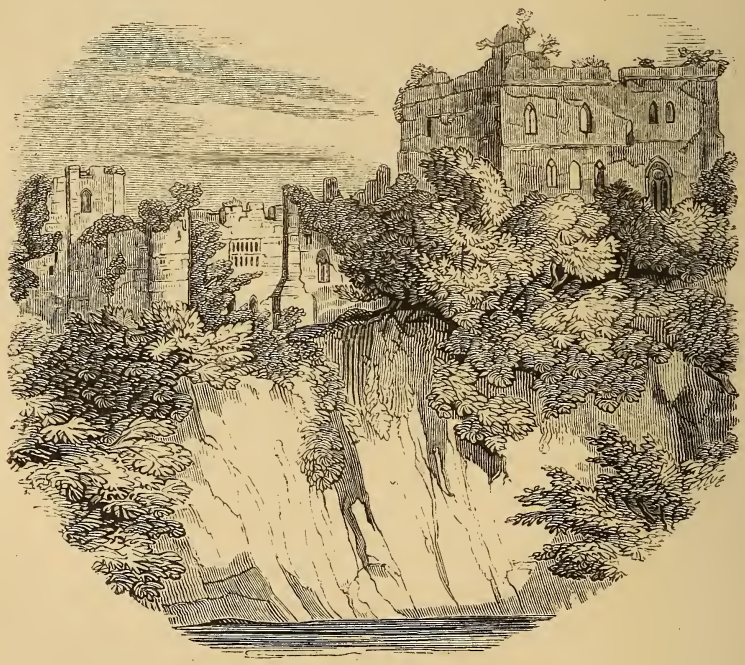
in retired and secret places he would meet with those who earnestly desired to know the way of life, and there he was wont to speak to them, and to pray with them, and to lament over the sad state of religion in the land.

But the Light cannot be hidden, neither can any faithful witness of the truth be long unknown. His friends perceived his danger—they warned him, while it was yet in his power, to withdraw to some distant place of safety. The old man was well aware that his life was in jeopardy, he looked every day to be apprehended and sent to prison; but he had counted the cost of the cause which he loved so well, and he was ready to lay down his life for his Saviour's sake. He told his kind friends plainly, that while he thanked them heartily for their good will, he had learnt one good lesson concerning the confession and denial of Christ, which was this—that if he, upon their persuasions, should presume to deny his master Christ, Christ in the last day would utterly deny and condemn him; and "therefore," said he, "I will by his favourable grace, confess and bear witness of Him before man, that I may find Him in everlasting life."

The fears and forebodings of his friends were too well founded; the poor old fisherman was taken by the officers of the town as suspected of heresy. The Bishop of Llandaff was then at Chepstow, and to that place Rawlins White was carried. There, after many combats and conflicts with the bishop and his chaplains, he was thrown into prison, but was so ill guarded—perhaps as being too insignificant a person to be worthy of much care—that he might often have escaped with ease.

The narrative of Foxe gives the details of his imprisonment and his examinations. It was communicated to the martyrologist by an eye-witness who was still alive when his work was published. A young man named John Dane, the son of a godly gentlewoman, who befriended the martyr when in prison, "was almost continually with him during his trouble unto his death," and took care to keep an account of all that occurred. Few men among the martyrs of the Marian persecution were more meek in endurance, more bold for the truth, and more faithful unto death, than the poor old fisherman of Cardiff. He had been forced to be present in the Bishop's Chapel during the celebration of the mass, and had continued

kneeling in a retired corner till the bell rang for the elevation of the host; at the ringing of the bell he rose up and came to the choir door, and there standing awhile, turned himself to the people, speaking these words : "Good people, if there be any brethren among you, or at the least, if it be but one brother among you, the same one bear witness at the day of judgment that I bow not to this idol," meaning the host that the priest held over his head.



CHEPSTOW CASTLE.

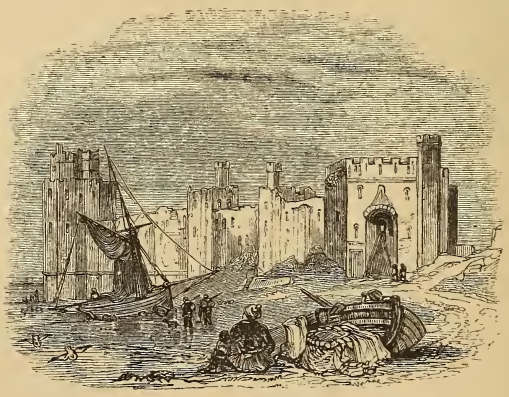
He had been summoned a second time to Chepstow, there he had been again brought before the bishop and his chaplains; there, after his protest against the mass, and a further conference with the bishop, he received his sentence, and was sent to Cardiff, being confined, till he was led forth to the stake, in a dark and filthy prison called Cockmarel. All his time in every

prison where he lay he spent in prayer and praise. His last message to his wife was to beg her to make and send to him his wedding garment—for so he called his shroud—and the poor sorrowing but faithful woman was obedient to his request. Early in the morning of the day in which he died, this wedding garment was brought to him, and he received it joyfully. He put it on and went forth when the appointed time was come. He looked about him when he saw the great company of armed men that guarded him on every side, and said with meek astonishment, "What meaneth all this! all this needed not! By God's grace, I will not start away; but I, with all my heart and mind, give unto God most hearty thanks that He hath made me worthy to abide all this for His holy name's sake!"

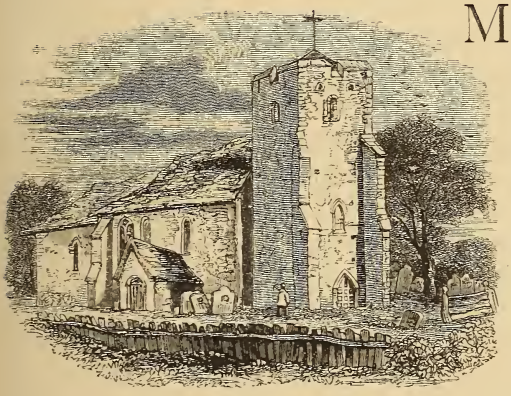
Another sight now met his eyes, and the sudden shock almost overcame him. His poor wife and children had come to look upon him for the last time as he passed along; and they stood weeping and making great lamentation. The tears trickled fast down the old man's face, but he went forward striving with the natural weakness of his heart. He knew where to seek for strength, and strength was given him. "Ah, flesh, stayest thou me so," he cried, striking his breast with his hand; "well, I tell thee, do what thou canst, thou shalt not by God's grace have the victory." He now came to the place where he was to die; the stake was already set up, and the wood heaped up prepared for the fire. Boldly he went forward, and kneeling down kissed the ground. He rose up, and the earth sticking to his face, he said, "Earth unto earth and dust unto dust—thou art my mother, and unto thee I shall return." Then with a cheerful countenance he set his back to the stake and stood erect. But again his spirit sank, when, seeing his faithful friend John Dane standing near, he said, "I feel a great fighting between the flesh and the spirit, and the flesh would fain conquer, and therefore I pray you if you see me tempted, hold your finger up to me, and I trust I shall remember myself." No such token however was needed. The martyr grew stronger and stronger in the faith for which he suffered. When chained to the stake he busied himself in gathering, as far as his hands could reach, the wood and straw which they were bringing to the stake, and he arranged them around him.

When all was ready, a Romish priest mounted a platform which had

been raised opposite the martyr, and stood up to address the people who were gathered in crowds at the place, for it was market day. Rawlins White heard him quietly, till he began to bring forward Scripture to support the perverted doctrine on the sacrament, which he preached. Then looking up, he solemnly rebuked him with such effect, that the priest was silenced. The fire was kindled, and the flames burnt fiercely, but the aged martyr stood erect, calmly and cheerfully enduring the agony of mortal suffering. His venerable countenance and white flowing beard appearing above the fire, and his whole expression seeming to be altogether angelical. For awhile he bathed his hands in the flames till the sinews shrank, and still while the fire raged, his voice was heard pouring forth this earnest godly prayer, "O Lord, receive my soul! O Lord, receive my spirit," until he could no longer open his mouth. He suffered long, but with unflinching courage and unshaken constancy. In patience he possessed his soul, till patience had her perfect work, and the martyr's spirit entered into rest.



ADISHAM, CANTERBURY.



MANY years have passed since the pleasant days I spent in the neighbourhood of the spot to which I would now bear my reader with me.

Our path is over the pleasant downs and fertile corn-fields of Kent, leaving behind us the ancient city of Canterbury. The name of this county we are told is derived from a word describing the peculiar character of its landscapes, a county abounding with clear, fair, and open downs. The village of Adisham lies in a hollow of these Kentish downs. The broad fields are spread over with sheaves of golden corn. The wayside banks are still adorned with their rich enamelling of flowers. The hedgerow trees still wear their deep green livery, though here and there a yellow leaf tells of the advancing season. On every hedge the honeysuckle with its creamy flowers and crimson buds breathes its rich odours, and the traveller's joy, or wild clematis, hangs its graceful wreaths in heavy luxuriance; and along the borders of the road the eye is attracted by the blossoms of the wild succory, of exquisite blue, set like stars around their pale green stems. It must be indeed a secluded spot, to which our steps

are bent; for the road is through the corn-fields and gates, which we have to open as we pass along close by the hedgerow sides. And this is Adisham, this sequestered village, these cottage homes embowered in trees —a quiet out of the way place, but not to be passed over by those who love the pure faith of their martyred forefathers.

This is the place where John Bland of Adisham, the faithful shepherd of God's sheep which then knew his voice, followed his godly calling, and preached, with all his heart, Christ crucified; adorning the doctrine that he preached with holy and consistent living. But there were traitors in this little camp, hating the truth their pastor loved and lived and preached—men, who being stirred up by the enemy of God and man, betrayed him to his adversaries. Here in his own church, and surrounded by his own people, he met with the first interruption to his ministry, the commencement, as it proved, to that course of continued outrage and persecution, which ended only with his cruel death at the martyr's stake. These silent walls shining in the full radiance of the lovely moonlight, have echoed to the loud and brutal taunts by which this meek and loving pastor was assailed, because he could not consent to suffer the sheep whom he had fed so faithfully and tenderly in the fresh pastures of the word of God, to be poisoned with baleful weeds from the barren wastes of Romish error. My reader, is the story of this country pastor known to you? If not, we cannot do better than seat ourselves upon a tombstone of this green churchyard, and you shall listen to a faithful narrative of the life of one who was taken from the little parish where his walk furnished a bright example of pastoral faithfulness, and made a glorious witness in those fires of martyrdom, by which the length and breadth of England were lit up, and which served, under God, to rekindle as it were the lamp of truth throughout the land.

Bland had been the tutor, according to Foxe, "of divers towardly young men, which even at that present time did handsomely flourish: in the number of whom was Doctor Edwin Sandys, successively Bishop of Worcester and Archbishop of York, a man of singular learning and worthiness, a scholar meet for such a schoolmaster."

In the commencement of the narrative, as given by Foxe, the following short and simple letter is found from the martyr to his father :—

"Dearly beloved Father in Christ Jesus—I thank you for your gentle letters; and to satisfy your mind, as concerning the troubles whereof you have heard, these shall both declare all my vexations that have chanced me since ye were with me, and also since I received your last letters. God keep you ever.

"Your son,

"JOHN BLAND."

Bland was a man of exemplary character, and had probably lived in undisturbed quietness in this his retired parish of Adisham, till the commencement of the reign of Queen Mary. It was about this season of the year, for it was upon the 3rd of September, 1553, on the Lord's Day, after divine service was over, but before the pastor had put off his surplice, that one of the churchwardens, whose name was John Austin, went to the Lord's table, and laying both his hands upon it, said, "Who set this here again?" It seems, that on the previous Sunday, the communion-table had been removed, without the pastor's knowledge, having been also, unknown to him, restored to its place. The clerk replied to the churchwarden, that he knew not: and then Austin instantly remarked, "He is a knave that set it here."

The minister, who was then going down the church, and wondering what Austin could mean, told him, that the queen had set forth a proclamation to this effect, that they should stir no sedition. But, before he could say more, Austin cried out, "Thou art a knave." "Well, goodman Austin," replied Bland, "what I have said, I have said:" but the insolent churchwarden cried out again with an oath, "Thou art a very knave." Here, the clerk, who seems to have been a pious man, interposed, and was met by the threat: "Ye are both heretic knaves, and have deceived us with this fashion too long; and if ye say any service here again, I will lay the table on thy face." Then, in a rage, he and others took up the table, and removed it.

Good Master Bland set off that same night to a neighbouring justice

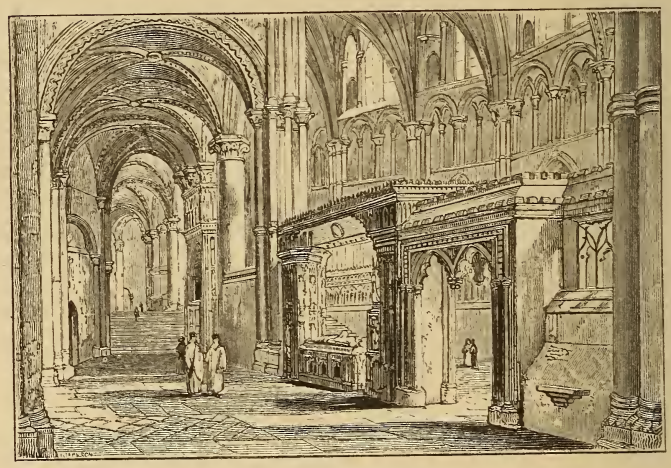
of the peace to complain of the churchwarden's conduct; and the table was restored to its place. On the 26th of the following November, two others of Austin's family, it seems, came to the church, after the communion-service was over, and began to question Bland, and to complain of his having taken down the tabernacle wherein the popish rood had been hung, and told him that the queen's pleasure was that it should be restored. And then they began disputing with their minister about the mass, adding many insulting reproaches, and calling the good man a heretic, and accusing him of having taught them error. Many other taunts were given, too long to relate: at last he was told, that as he had pulled down the altar, he must build it again. They then threatened that they would bring a priest there, and have a mass on Sunday, and a preacher that should prove him a heretic, if he dared abide his coming. The singular patience and gentleness of the Christian minister was evident during all these proceedings, and he observed from that time forth an honest distinction between his allegiance to the King of kings, and his duty to the sovereign of his country. When told it was by the queen's authority that the popish priest should enter his church and preach from his pulpit, he offered no opposition: but on that occasion the priest came not, and a large concourse of people having assembled, Bland would not suffer them to depart without setting the truth before them. He made the epistle for the day the subject of his address to them, "desiring the congregation to note three or four places in the same epistle which touched on quietness and love one to another. Then reading the epistle, he noted the same places, and so making an end thereof, desired all present to depart quietly and in peace, as they did without any manner of disturbance or token of evil." Such is the account given by five witnesses, whose names are signed to their testimonial.

In the middle of the following winter the village pastor on entering his church found a Romish priest there. He was performing matins, and about to commence the mass; on seeing Bland, he asked him whether he would oppose the queen's commands, and was answered by the gentle minister that he would not resist the law. The epistle and gospel having been read, Bland requested that he might be permitted to address the

people, and then with much plainness of speech, and godly faithfulness to the inspired word, he set before the congregation the many dangerous errors of the mass, and showed how one heretic after another, presuming to alter and add to the word of God, had each added a patch—such were his words—to the service of the mass. "I began to declare," said he, "what men made the mass, and recited every man's name, and the patch that he had put to the mass." As might be supposed, such plain speaking gave great offence. He was interrupted in an insulting manner, and was violently handled and personally ill-treated by the churchwarden Austin, and others. They ordered him to hear the mass. Bland, who was determined to be present, but at the same time not to oppose the queen's commands, stood with his back turned to the priest and his altar, and was finally shut up in the side chapel of his own church. After this, the minister and his clerk were both conveyed to Canterbury, and there put in prison: but no charge could be made out against them, so that bail was accepted, and they were both set at large again.

Two months after, Master Bland was a second time seized, and remained for ten weeks in prison, but again obtained his liberty, for his enemies sought in vain for any just cause of complaint against him. His troubles, however, were not ended. In the following May, he was summoned to appear in the spiritual court, before the noted Harpsfield, archdeacon of Canterbury, and Collins the Commissary. The proceedings and examinations to which he was from time to time subjected are in print, as taken from his own pen. They turn chiefly on what appears to have been the common subject of accusation against the Reformers of those days, the corporeal presence in the mass, which no man of common sense, well read in Scripture, could conscientiously agree to. The arguments of Bland are well worth reading, for they prove that on repeated occasions he was enabled with ease to silence and confound his opposers. Many ways were tried to make him criminate himself; but the plain way of truth, and the wisdom of knowing when to be silent, made it very difficult for the adversaries of this simple-minded pastor to prove anything against him. On one occasion, when required by the commissary to declare his faith, he at once recited the Apostles' Creed. He was taken

from prison to prison, he was placed at the bar with common felons, put in irons, and taunted and insulted even by his judges. One of them, Sir John Baker, before whom he was examined, said that he himself would give six faggots to burn him, rather than he should be unburned: concluding his brutal speech by crying out: "Hence, knave, hence." The chief judge against him was Dr. Richard Thornton, a notorious time-server, who had left Popery to become a Protestant in King Edward's days, and who, when Mary came to the throne, turned papist again, and was as bitter a persecutor as any.



CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.

As in the case of Bradford, the persecutors of Bland seem to have resorted to every kind of shift to keep the good pastor in prison, till the commands of the queen had been constituted laws of the realm; knowing that, till then, they could not lawfully put him to death. Like Bradford, too, the minister of Adisham, after refuting the calumnies and triumphing over the sophistries of his opponents, at length manfully but meekly declared his faith in the most open and unguarded manner. His condemnation followed, and his execution took place immediately after. "His answers and confession being taken," says Foxe, "respite was given him

yet a few days to deliberate with himself. On the 25th day of June, making his appearance again in the chapter-house of the cathedral, he there bravely and boldly withstood the authority of the pope, whereupon his sentence was read, and so he was condemned and committed to the secular power." This was his prayer, before his death, and it bears striking testimony to the pious and lovely spirit of the martyr.

"O Lord Jesus, for whose love I do willingly leave this life, and desire rather the bitter death of this cross, with the loss of all earthly things, than to abide the blasphemy of thy holy name, or else to obey man in breaking of thy commandments, O Lord, thou seest, that whereas I might live in worldly wealth to worship false gods, and honour thy enemy, I chose rather the torments of this body, and loss of this my life, and have counted all things but vile dust and dung, that I might win thee; which death is more dear unto me than thousands of gold and silver. Such love, O Lord, hast thou laid up in my breast, that I thirst for thee, as the deer that is wounded desireth the brook. Send thy holy Comforter, O Lord, to aid, comfort, and strengthen this weak piece of earth, which is void of all strength of itself. Thou rememberest, O Lord, that I am but dust, and not able to do anything that is good. Therefore, O Lord, as thou of thy accustomed goodness hast bidden me to this banquet, and counted me worthy to drink of thine own cup amongst thine elect; give me strength against this element, that as it is to my sight most irksome and terrible, so to my mind it may be, at thy commandment, as an obedient servant, sweet and pleasant; and through the strength of thy Holy Spirit, I may pass through the strength of this fire into thy bosom, according unto thy promise, and for this mortality to receive immortality, and for this corruptible to put on incorruption. Accept this burnt-offering and sacrifice, O Lord, not for the sacrifice itself, but for thy dear Son's sake, my Saviour: for whose testimony I offer this free-will offering with all my heart and with all my soul. O heavenly Father, forgive me my sins, as I forgive the whole world. O sweet Saviour, spread thy wings over me. O God, grant me thy Holy Ghost, through whose merciful inspiration I am come hither. Conduct me unto everlasting life. Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit: Lord Jesus, receive my soul. So be it!"

On the twelfth day of July, 1555, the Parson of Adisham, John Frankish—who was also a clergyman, Nicholas Sheterden, Humphrey Middleton, and another, named Crocker, were burnt in the martyrs' field at Canterbury. One named Thacker, who was condemned to suffer with them, purchased his liberty by recanting.

RUINS OF ST. AUGUSTINE MONASTERY, CANTERBURY.

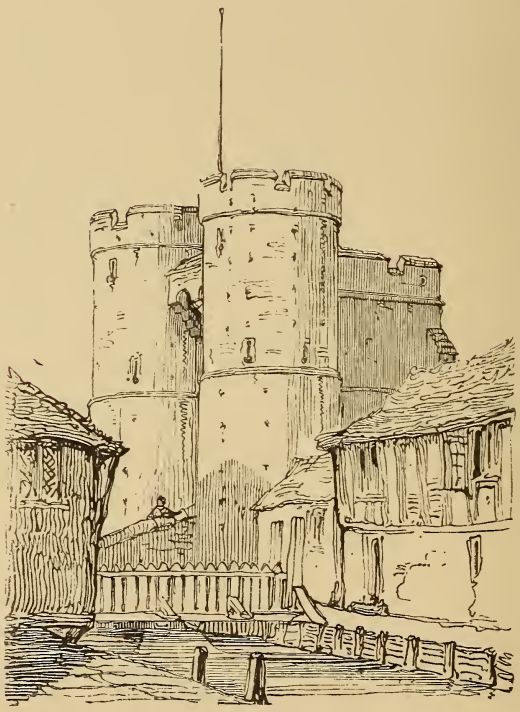
But I have more to tell of Canterbury and the godly martyrs who suffered there.

It was late one evening in the month of October, that a woman belonging to the peasantry of this county of Kent, entered the city of

Canterbury, in the company of a little boy. Her errand was a most unusual one, for she came to deliver herself up as a prisoner to the castle of Canterbury : and the circumstance of her coming in charge of that child was at once a proof of her integrity, and the noble tenderness of her spirit. Her crime was her determined refusal to be present at the sacrifice of the mass in the church at Staplehurst, which is a village at some distance from the city. She had before been a prisoner for the same offence, having been sent thither, with many mocks and taunts. Here she lay fourteen days, till at the entreaty of her husband, some of the wealthy men in the neighbourhood of her native village wrote entreating her release. Her modest firmness of purpose, however, had not been shaken by her imprisonment, as her answers to the bishop, when brought before him, plainly proved. Foxe relates that, "being summoned before the bishop, he asked the poor woman, 'If she would go home and go to the church?' her reply was very simple. 'If I would have so done, I need not have come hither.' 'Then, wilt thou go home,' said the bishop, 'and be shriven of thy parish priest?' Alice Benden answered 'No, that she would not.' 'Well,' said he, 'go thy way home, and go to the church when thou wilt;' whereunto she answered nothing ; but a priest that stood by said, 'She saith she will, my lord;' wherefore he let her go, and she came forthwith home." Such is Foxe's short account of her first imprisonment.

The husband of this devoted woman appears to have been a man guided by no principle, and acting only according to the humour and the will of the moment. On her return home, the wretched man, in the waywardness of his unstable character, seems to have recommenced his attack upon her about her non-attendance at church; and doubtless met with a meek but decided refusal from his wife, who made it a point of conscience not to attend. About a fortnight afterwards he met with a party of his neighbours, to whom he appears to have spoken in the most unkind and unguarded manner of his wife's unalterable decision. The report of his words was brought to Sir John Guildford, a magistrate, and again the order was made out for the imprisonment of Alice Benden. As if to prove that he had made no mistake in the accusations he had brought

forward against his wife in his idle discourse, he came forward, and offered to take charge of poor Alice and carry her to prison himself, actually receiving the money from the constable to take the trouble out of his hands. It was then that this God-fearing woman, resolved to save her husband from the shame of such an act, went herself to the constable, and



WEST GATE, CANTERBURY.

begged him to let his son have the custody of her to prison, promising that she would go there faithfully. Her character for truth must have been known, for her word was taken, and thus in the charge of a child went Alice Benden, to prison and to death.

This poor countrywoman was no common person. From the few facts that have come down to us of her life and death there seems to have been an admirable harmony of mental and moral qualities in her character. Many have been bold and courageous, but indiscreet and ungentle; many have been mild and forgiving, but weak and unstable. Poor Alice Benden presented in her character the union of these graces of the Christian faith in fair and consistent keeping. We are told that while she was in prison, she practised with another woman, "a prison-fellow of hers," that they should live both of them on twopence halfpenny a day, to try how they might bear the hunger and suffering which they foresaw they should be called to undergo; for it was well known that they would be removed to the bishop's prison, where three farthings a-piece a day was the sum allowed for the prisoner's fare; and on this sum, for fourteen days, was Alice Benden afterwards forced to subsist.

The winter drew on, and Alice lay in the cold cell of a cheerless prison. At the end of January, the hard heart of her husband seems to have relented towards the unoffending woman—and he came to the bishop and begged that Alice might be set at liberty. But he came too late; the merciless bishop was not to be moved. He pronounced her to be an obstinate heretic, and one that would not be reformed, and he would not consent to her release. Again the spirit of the unstable man turned against his wife, and he laid information against the brother of Alice, complaining, that Roger Hall (for so her brother was named) had found means to hold frequent communication with the poor prisoner; and he told the bishop that if he could keep her brother from her, she would turn, for, added the cruel husband, "He comforteth her, giveth her money, and persuadeth her not to return or relent."

The prison of Alice Benden was soon after changed, and she was taken to a wretched dungeon called Monday's Hole, strict orders being at the same time given, that her brother's coming should be watched for, and that he also should be taken and committed to prison. This dungeon was in a vault beneath the ground, in a place where, in these Protestant days, prisons are not to be found. It was within a court where the prebend's chambers were. The window of the dungeon was surrounded

by a paling so high, that the prisoner in the dungeon beneath could not possibly see any one beyond the paling, unless he stood by it and looked over it. There, by the good providence of God, in the absence of the jailor, that loving and faithful brother at length discovered the place of her imprisonment. He came at a very early hour while the man was gone to ring the church bell, and he managed with some difficulty to convey money in a loaf of bread at the end of a pole, to his half-starved sister. But this was the only intercourse he could obtain, and this was after she had already lain five weeks in that miserable dungeon. "All that time," says Foxe, "no creature was known to come at her more than her keeper." She lay on a little short straw between a pair of stocks and a stone wall: her fare being one halfpenny a day in bread, and a farthing in drink, till she entreated to have the three farthings in bread, and water to drink. And there she lay for nine weeks, without once being enabled to change her raiment, in the depth of the winter.

On her being first brought into that loathsome dungeon, the poor ill-treated woman gave way to complaint and lamentations, wondering within herself, "why her Lord God did with his so heavy justice suffer her to be sequestered from her loving fellows in such extreme misery. And in these dolorous mournings did she continue," adds her biographer, "till on a night as she was in her sorrowful supplications, rehearsing this verse of the Psalm: 'Why art thou so heavy, O my soul'—and again, 'the right hand of the Most High can change all,' she received comfort in the midst of her miseries, and after that continued very joyful until her delivery from the same."

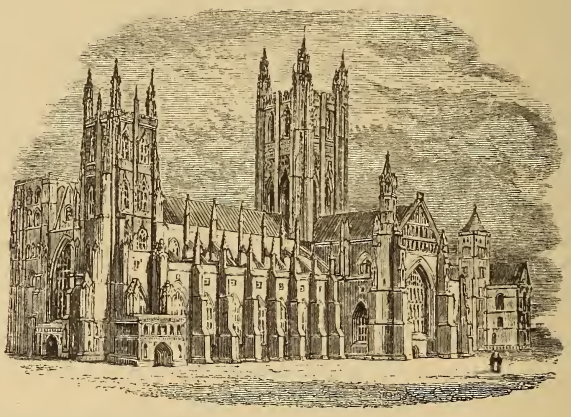
At length, on the 25th of March, in the year 1557, Alice Benden was taken from her dungeon and brought up for trial. And the question was again put to her, "Would she now go home, and go to the church, or no?" and great favour was promised her if she would but reform. Her answer showed the stedfastness of her purpose: "I am thoroughly persuaded by the great extremity that you have already showed me, that you are not of God, neither can your doings be godly; and I see that you seek my utter destruction," and she showed them how lame she was from the cold and the want of food, and the sufferings of her wretched prison; for

she was not able to move without great pain. Her whole appearance indeed was most piteous. After they removed her to the west gate her clothes had been changed and her person kept clean for a time, the whole of her skin peeled off, as if she had recovered from some mortal poison.

The day of her death was nigh at hand. Her deportment was then in keeping with the rest of her exemplary conduct. At the latter end of April she was again called for and condemned to die; and from that time committed to the castle prison, where she continued till the 19th day of June. Two circumstances attending her last hours were peculiarly affecting. In undressing herself for the stake, after having given her handkerchief to one John Banks, probably a faithful Christian friend who was standing by, to keep in memory of her, she took from her waist a white lace, which she gave to the keeper, entreating him to give it to her brother, Roger Hall, and to tell him that it was the last band that she was bound with, except the chain; and then she took a shilling of Philip and Mary, "a bowed shilling," which her father had bent, and sent her when she was first committed to prison, desiring that her said brother should with obedient salutations render the same to her father again. It was the first piece of money, she said, which he had sent her after her troubles began: and then in her lovely spirit of piety, she added, that she returned it to him as a token of God's goodness to her in all her sufferings, that he might understand, that she had never lacked money while she was in prison.

There is little to attract the glance, or mark the spot beneath us, where John Bland and Alice Benden, and others of like faith and courage won the crown of martyrdom. The eye passes over that field of dingy grass, its few desolate-looking elms of meagre foliage, and the martyrs' pit with a puddle of foul water at its shallow bottom—to the bright prospect beyond, rich masses of clustering trees, fields of golden corn, and many a cottage-home dotting the splendid landscape, as it lies, now in shade and now in sunshine, beneath the deep blue heavens, while the shadows of the rolling clouds pass swiftly over it. Here, there is a heaviness in the air, but there, in the open country, the pure breezes are blowing

freshly; yet again and again the heart calls back the eye to fix its thoughtful gaze upon the neglected martyrs' field, hallowed by the sufferings of those who, while on earth were "destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom indeed the world was not worthy," but whose names are written in the Book of Life.



OLD CLEVE, GLOUCESTER.

OUR path lies now in a westward direction, that we may gather what information is to be found of the early years of one of our most distinguished martyrs; one as remarkable for the severe simplicity of his creed, as for the noble and glowing affections of his heart. A man peculiarly fitted to take his appointed part in the great work of the Reformation: uncompromising in his principles, inflexible in his integrity, unflinching in his courage, and adorning the high position which he occupied, with a calm and graceful dignity.

John Hoper, or Hooper, was born in Somersetshire. Probably it was on the northern side of the county that his father dwelt, for the name is still found here. He has perchance stood on this wide-watered shore, where the wall of rocks rises to the height of a hundred feet, abruptly from the beach of the Bristol Channel, and caught, or thought he caught, at times the deep and swinging sound of the vesper bell from the abbey above; or, in his credulous boyhood, gazing upon the broad waters opened his eyes with childish wonder, as he pondered the strange legend he had listened to, over the glowing embers of his father's hearth; when, in the long winter evenings, the gossips there, told how the famous Saint Decuman floated on a bundle of rods across the waves, and, leaving

Wales, made this part of the country the scene of his miraculous presence. Let us climb this winding path to seek the chapel on the rock, where the youthful Hooper may have often knelt and crossed himself as he sought the favour of the murdered saint; and then we may ask our way to the once celebrated Abbey of Old Clyve. This must be the spot; these must be the ruins of Clyve Abbey, and this lovely valley is surely the Vallis Florida of the old charters! Such was always the site chosen by the Cistercian monks for their residence; they never built their abbeys in towns, but in some lonely and sequestered valley; and doubtless, when these dismantled walls were standing in their strength and in their magnificence, there was a wild and desolate beauty about the place. The bright waves of the Bristol Channel are not more than two miles distant, but the ground slopes upward, from the site of the abbey to the summit of the lofty cliffs which rise above the sea, and the eyes of the cloistered recluse would rest only on the quiet features of this home view. The Abbey of Clyve, or Cleve, was founded by William de Romara, Earl of Lincoln, and bestowed by him, with all his lands and liberties, etc., at Cleve, on the Cistercian monks whom he placed here.

The ruins are still extensive, and have been long roofed in, and inhabited as a farmhouse, and two or three of the abbey fish-ponds are still to be found here. They, however, who behold the ruined abbey as it now appears, can form but a faint conception of the stately building, and the domain surrounding it, in the days of its prosperity. That fine old gateway is still a noble specimen of what the monastery of Clyve once was. My readers will find a view of it in Grose, taken in 1754, and another in Collinson's Somersetshire, as it appeared in 1791. Here then it was that Hooper came, attracted perhaps by the cherished associations of his childish years, and enamoured with the imaginary charm of a monastic life. Like Martin Luther and John Bale, John Hooper commenced life by retiring from it as a monk.

He had come hither from Oxford, where he had been brought up under the tuition of his uncle, William Hooper, a fellow of Merton College. Having taken his degree as Bachelor of Arts, in the year 1518, he had soon after removed to Cleve, and became a monk in the Cistercian

MERTON COLLEGE, OXFORD.

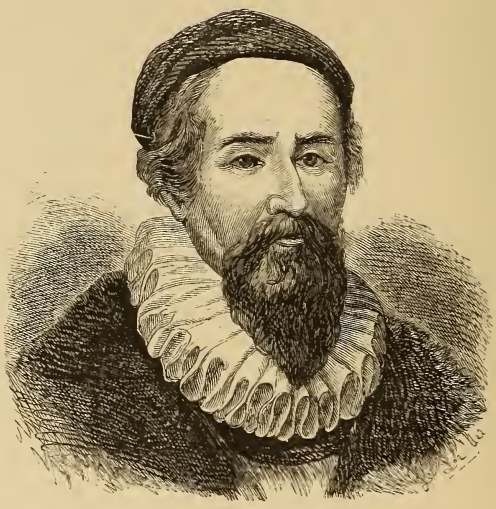
monastery. But the legends of popish saints, and the dark and wretched superstitions of a monastery, were to be soon abandoned; and the quiet seclusion of the flowery valley, and the steep hills of Cleve, exchanged for the busy scenes and the stirring conflicts of active life. The monk that bowed his knee to many mediators, and his mind to many traditions, was soon to become the disciple of one Master, even Christ, and the student of one book, the Holy Bible.

The mind of Hooper was graciously released from the trammels of its early prejudices and associations. He was not a man to be made the creature of circumstances. The events of his future life plainly prove this, and truth, when once revealed to him, became dearer to him than life itself. He strove to live up to the light God gave to him, and followed with dauntless energy and eager zeal its first faint shining; and He who giveth more grace to those who improve his gracious gifts, by his Holy Spirit guided this young and earnest disciple unto all truth.

He left the abbey, disgusted perhaps with the ways of some of his associates—for the immoral practices of the inmates of most of the convents in England became soon after notorious; and though some good and pious men were found in the monastic orders, the preamble to the Act of Parliament for the dissolution of religious houses, founded upon the report rendered after the visitation of the monasteries, states, that "manifest sin, vicious, carnal and abominable living is daily used and committed in Abbeys, Priories, and other Religious Houses of Monks, Canons and Nuns; and that albeit many continual visitations have been heretofore had by the space of two hundred years and more for an honest charitable reformation of such unthrifty, carnal and abominable living, yet that nevertheless little or none amendment was hitherto had, but that their vicious living shamefully increased and augmented."

John Hooper returned to Oxford. The writings of some of the continental Reformers fell into his hands. In a letter to Bullinger, who afterwards became one of his dearest friends, he gives the following account of his conversion: "Beloved brother in Christ—Not many years since, when I lived at court, and my life too much resembled that of a courtier, I happily met with some writings of the excellent Zuinglius, and

the commentary upon the epistles of Paul, which you published for the general benefit, and which will prove a lasting memorial of your name. I was unwilling to neglect these excellent gifts of God, thus set forth by you to the world at large, especially as I perceived that they seriously affected the salvation of my soul and my everlasting welfare. Therefore I considered my work to be so valuable, that with an earnest study and an almost superstitious diligence, I employed myself therein both night and day; nor was I ever weary of that labour. For after I was grown up, and



JOHN HOOPER.

by the kindness of my father, my wants were liberally supplied, I had blasphemed God by a wicked worship and an almost idolatrous heart, following the evil ways of my forefathers, until I became rightly acquainted with the Lord. Being at length set free by the kindness of God, for which I am indebted to Him, and to you as the means, nothing now remains, so far as the remainder of my life and my last end are concerned, but that I should worship the Lord with a pure heart."

Such was the intense desire of this earnest enquirer, and it became, by God's grace, the vital and directing principle of his future life. He gave

ZURICH.

heed no longer to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith, but with a pure heart and a good conscience, and with faith unfeigned, he went on his way, resolute to follow Christ through evil report and good report. He had become an enlightened, zealous, sober-minded Protestant. When in the reign of Henry the Eighth the statute of the Six Articles was put in execution, "falling into displeasure and hatred," as Foxe relates, "of certain Rabbies in Oxford," Hooper quitted the university, and became chaplain and steward to Sir Thomas Arundel of Devonshire. Sir Thomas Arundel, it seems, was displeased with the religious opinions of his chaplain, but having a high esteem for him, managed to send him on business to Bishop Gardiner, writing a private letter to the bishop, in which he besought him to confer with Hooper, and "to do some good upon him," but requiring him in any case to send him home again.

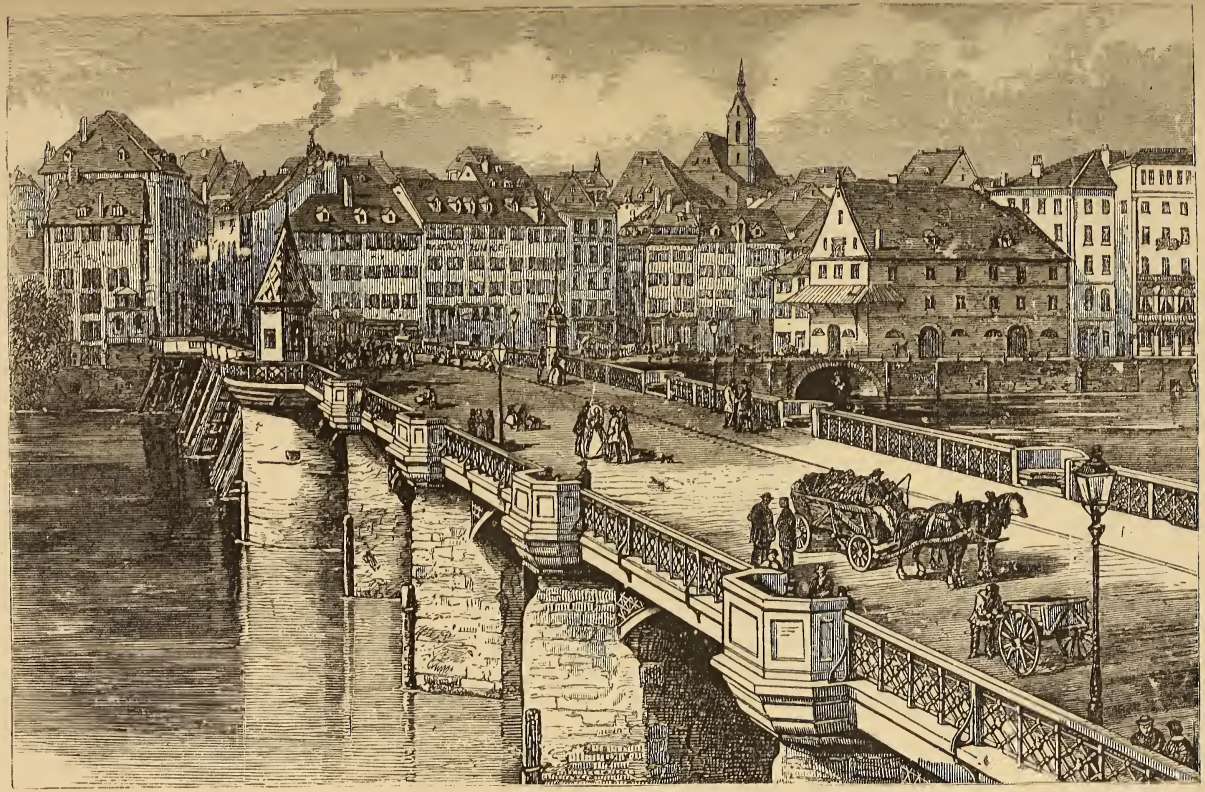
The conference between Hooper and the Bishop of Winchester lasted four or five days, and at the end of that time Gardiner sent him back to Sir Thomas Arundel, commending his learning and his ability, but bearing a secret grudge and enmity against him. Hooper soon found out that his patron's house was no longer a safe abode for him, and borrowing a horse from a friend, whose life he had saved, a little before, from the gallows, he secretly fled to the sea-coast and escaped to France. After residing for a short time at Paris, he returned to England, and found a home with a Mr. Sentlow. But being again in danger, he passed over to Ireland in the disguise of a sailor, and from thence he proceeded to Holland, and afterwards to Switzerland. There at Basle and Zurich he met with many pious men of the Reformed faith. Among others who became his personal friends at that time, perhaps the most valued was the excellent and learned Bullinger. At Zurich, Hooper married a Burgundian lady to whom he was truly attached, and who seems, from all that we are told of her, to have been in every way worthy of his choice and his affection.

On the accession of the young King Edward the Sixth to the throne of England, Hooper, with many other exiles, returned to his native land, determined to help forward the Lord's work among his own people to the utmost of his ability. It is recorded, that on taking leave of

Bullinger and his other continental friends, and returning thanks to them for their great kindness and affection towards him in a foreign land, Bullinger said to him, "Master Hooper, though we are sorry to part with your company for your own cause, yet much greater cause we have to rejoice both for your sake, and especially for the cause of Christ's true religion, that you shall now return out of long banishment into your native country again:" anticipating the rank and power which Hooper would be raised to, he added, "You shall come, peradventure, to be a bishop, and you shall find many new friends; and if you will please not to forget us again, then I pray you let us hear from you." The reply of Hooper plainly shows in what mind he was about to encounter the sunshine of worldly prosperity which awaited him in England, and that he looked steadily beyond to the dark and troubled tempest which should burst full upon his head. After many affectionate expressions, he says, "You shall be sure from time to time to hear from me, and I will write unto you how it goeth with me, but the last news of all I shall not be able to write, for there," said he, taking Bullinger by the hand, "there, where I shall take most pains, there shall you hear of me to be burned to ashes; and that shall be the last news, which I shall not be able to write unto you, but you shall hear of me."

Leaving the safe and happy refuge he had found at Basle and Zurich he returned to England, and his faithful preaching drew crowds to hear him. He preached twice every Sunday, and the church was so filled that many could not reach farther than the doors. "In his doctrine," we are told, "Master Hooper was earnest, in tongue eloquent, in the Scriptures perfect, and in pains indefatigable. He corrected sin, and sharply inveighed against the iniquity of the world and corrupt abuses of Popery."

On being summoned to preach before the youthful king, Hooper was so highly esteemed, admired, and valued for his Master's sake, that by the king's command he was soon made Bishop of Gloucester; but there was a long delay in his consecration, owing to his objection to the vestments worn by bishops, and to the oaths required at their consecration. Hooper was opposed in his view of these things both by Cranmer and Ridley, who considered his objections uncalled for. But Hooper



BASLE.

was right, for in the oath he was required to swear by the saints, and he deemed the long scarlet chimere and white rochet, then worn by the popish bishops, as unbecoming the grave decency of the sacred office. He might also feel that the commencement of the reformation of the Church of England was the most fitting season for those in authority to introduce a new and better order, even in things which would be at other times indifferent. With regard to the oath,* his protest took effect, and it was

GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL.

from that time struck out of the consecration service: as to the vestments, however, he saw it wisest to yield. In the table of *Pro* and *Con* which Fuller gives on these points, he remarks, when briefly reciting the arguments on both sides, "that the best thing that could be said of such ornaments was—that they were useless, being otherwise ridiculous and superstitious; and that in the business there was too much of the serpent and too little of the dove to offend those within and to invite those

* The oath he objected to was the oath of supremacy, which, as it stood in King Edward's ordinal, was much more full than that adopted subsequently. The taker of it binds himself to all statutes "made, *and to be made*," in support of the king's ecclesiastical authority, and in contravention of the papal usurpations.—*Soames*.

without to the Church, driving Protestants thence to draw Papists thither, and that Hooper had put himself upon the trial of the *Searcher of hearts*—that no obstinacy, but mere conscience made him refuse these ornaments." Hooper stood out at first so resolutely, that he was even sent to prison, and kept some days in durance.

The diocese of Worcester was afterwards united to that of Gloucester, and so exemplary was Bishop Hooper in the fulfilment of his high and responsible office, that his example is set forth as a pattern for all bishops. "So careful was he," says Foxe, "in his cure, that he left no pains untaken, nor ways unsought, how to train up the flock of Christ in the true word of salvation, continually labouring in the same. No father in his household, no gardener in his garden, no husbandman in his vineyard, was more or better occupied than he in his diocese among his flock, going about his towns and villages, in teaching and preaching to the people there; and while thus attending to the public duties of his calling, he did not fail to bring up his own children in learning and good manners, so that he was equally to be commended for his fatherly usage at home and his bishop-like doings abroad. Everywhere he kept one religion in one uniform doctrine and integrity, so that if you entered into the bishop's palace, you would suppose you had entered into some church or temple. In every corner there was some savour of virtue, good example, honest conversation, and reading of Holy Scriptures, there was not to be seen in his house any courtly roystering or idleness, no pomp at all; as for the revenues of his bishoprics, he pursed nothing, but bestowed it in hospitality. Twice was I," says Foxe, "in his house in Worcester, where in his common hall, I saw a table spread with good store of meat, and set full of beggars and poor folk." And he adds, that he learnt from the servants that it was the daily custom of their master to entertain the poor in this manner by course, and that he and his ministers were accustomed to examine these needy guests in the Lord's Prayer, the articles of their faith, and the Ten Commandments, and when he had done this, and seen them all served, he himself sat down to dinner, but not till then.

We find his wife writing thus to Bullinger about her husband's labours,

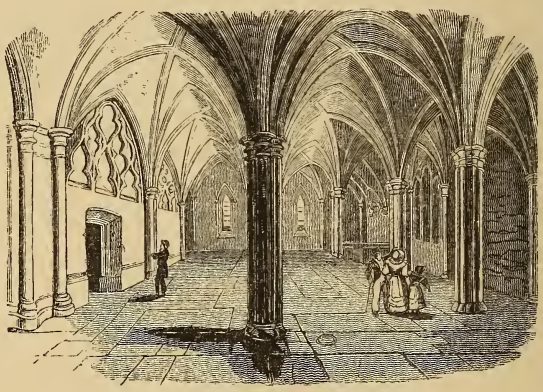
"I entreat you to recommend Master Hooper to be more moderate in his labour, for he preaches four, or at least three times every day, and I am afraid lest these over-abundant exertions should occasion a premature decay, by which very many souls now hungering after the word of God, and whose hunger is well known from their frequent anxiety to hear him, will be deprived both of their teacher, and his doctrine."

Thus it continued with this truly primitive bishop during the reign of King Edward; but when Mary came to the throne, his troubles began afresh. Hooper was one of the first of the good and holy men called upon to answer for their religion before the council. Gardiner and Bonner, as might have been expected, were the most virulent in their persecution of him. Though, as he positively affirmed, the queen owed him, by just account, eighty pounds or more, he was thrown into prison on the false charge of being indebted to the queen. He gives a touching account of his sufferings in the Fleet prison, where he had nothing for his bed, but a little pad of straw with a tick and a few feathers therein; the chamber being vile and stinking, having on one side the common sink and filth of the house, and on the other the town-ditch, so that the stench of the place brought upon him sundry diseases. "During which time," he writes, "I have been sick, and the doors, bars, hasps and chains, being all closed and made fast upon me, I have mourned, called, and cried for help. But the warden, when he hath known me many times ready to die, and when the poor men of the wards have called to help me, hath commanded the doors to be kept fast, and charged that none of his men should come at me, saying, 'Let him alone, it were a good riddance of him.'" He adds, "I have suffered imprisonment almost eighteen months, my good living, friends, and comforts, taken from me. The queen has put me in prison and gives nothing to feed me, neither is there suffered any to come to me, whereby I might have relief. I am with a wicked man and woman, so that I see no remedy, saving God's help, but that I shall be cast away in prison before I come to judgment. But I commit my just cause to God, whose will be done, whether it be by life or death."

This was the way in which the Romish party treated a man who

exemplified so consistently and admirably the discipline of a bishop of Christ's Church, as given by the inspired apostle. "A bishop must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach, one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." But he was deemed worthy to take his place among those suffering and glorious saints to whom our Lord has said: "Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake." And he fought the good fight till he was made more than a conqueror through Him that loved him and gave Himself for him.

The time came at last for the examination of this good man before his cruel and ungodly persecutors. He and Rogers were taken to the Lady Chapel in the church of St. Mary Overy, now St. Saviour's, in



THE LADY CHAPEL, ST. MARY OVERY.

Southwark, and there three several charges were brought against him, First. His maintaining the lawfulness of the marriage of the clergy. Secondly. His defending the Scriptural doctrine respecting divorce; and, Thirdly. His denying the real presence of Christ's body in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. In each of these Hooper was condemned, being railed at from time to time by his savage judges, one of them calling

him "beast," because he refused to give up his lawful wife. After his condemnation he was carried by night to Newgate, some of the sergeants being sent before to put out the costermongers' candles, that he might pass along in darkness, for his persecutors dreaded a tumult of the people on his being recognised, so greatly was he loved and had in reverence. But, notwithstanding their precautions the people discovered that the godly Dr. Hooper and Master Rogers were passing by. London was not then lighted, and on both sides of the crowded streets pious householders stood at their doors with lighted candles, and, as the sufferers passed by, they cheered and encouraged them, praising God for the true doctrine which they had taught them, and praying God to strengthen them in the same to the end.

Hooper and Rogers were degraded in the chapel of Newgate by Bishop Bonner, and Hooper was ordered for execution at Gloucester. The news was received with joy by the dauntless bishop, who lifted up his eyes and hands and gave God praise and thanks, that He had permitted him to be sent to witness a good confession before his own people, and to confirm the truth of the doctrine he had taught them, by his sufferings and death. He then sent to his servant's house for his boots, spurs, and cloak, and made himself ready for his journey. They led him away while it was dark, in the early morning, and gave him in charge to six of the queen's guard at a spot near St. Dunstan's church in Fleet Street, and by the guard he was taken to the Angel inn in the Strand, where breakfast was given to him, before he set out on his last journey. At daybreak the party mounted their horses, the bishop having a hood under his hat pulled down over his face, that he might not be recognised. He was well known at various inns on the road, and his guards took care to find out from their prisoner at what houses he had been used to stop, and then took him to other inns. At Cirencester he stopped to dine at a woman's house who had hated the truth, and formerly spoken evil of him, but seeing him led forth to die for the faith, she wept and lamented over him, declaring that she had often affirmed that if he were put to the trial he would not stand to his doctrine.

About a mile from Gloucester much people of the city were waiting

who had come out to meet him, and they accosted him with blessings and with lamentation. The guards took alarm, but their prisoner was not one to provoke disturbance or confusion. Foxe's narrative is very simple and touching: "After dinner he rode forwards, and came to Gloucester about five of the clock, and a mile without the town was much people assembled, which cried and lamented his estate: insomuch that one of the guard rode post into the town, to require aid of the mayor and sheriffs, fearing lest he should have been taken from them. The officers and their retinue repaired to the gate with weapons, and commanded the people to keep their houses, etc., but there was no man that once gave any signification of any such rescue or violence. So was he lodged at one Ingram's house in Gloucester, and that night (as he had done all the way) he did eat his meat quietly, and slept his first sleep soundly, as it was reported by them of the guard and others. After his first sleep he continued all that night in prayer until the morning, and then he desired that he might go into the next chamber (for the guard were also in the chamber where he lay), that there being solitary he might pray and talk with God: so that all the day, saving a little at meat, and when he talked at any time with such as the guard licensed to speak with him, he bestowed in prayer." Prayer was indeed his continued employment, with some necessary interruptions, till his death. With the dignity of a truly noble mind, he kept up to the last his consistent character of an overseer of Christ's flock, and with his dignity and self-possession he united a lamb-like gentleness and meekness. In the conversations which took place between him and the noblemen of the county, and the mayor and sheriffs of the city commissioned to take charge of his execution, he seems never to have lost sight of his high office, as one accustomed rather to command than to obey: but there was at the same time a holy sweetness in his bearing, which showed that he was truly a humble follower of his most gentle and gracious Master, Jesus Christ.

How beautiful is the account of his address to the blind boy, who entreated to speak with him: "The same day a blind boy, after long intercession made to the guard, obtained license to be brought unto Master Hooper's speech. The boy, not long afore, had suffered imprisonment at

Gloucester for confessing of the truth. Master Hooper after he had examined him of his faith, and the cause of his imprisonment, beheld him stedfastly, and (the water appearing in his eyes) said unto him: 'Ah poor boy, God hath taken from thee thy outward sight, for what consideration he best knoweth: but he hath given thee another sight much more precious, for he hath indued thy soul with the eye of knowledge and faith. God give thee grace continually to pray unto him, that thou lose not that sight, for then shouldest thou be blind both in body and soul.'"

Not less touching and noble is the conversation which he held with Sir Anthony Kingston. It is given by Foxe, probably from Sir Anthony himself: "Amongst others that spake with him, Sir Anthony Kingston, Knight, was one. Who seeming in times past his very friend, was then appointed by the queen's letters to be one of the commissioners, to see execution done upon him. Master Kingston being brought into the chamber, found him at his prayers: and as soon as he saw Master Hooper, he burst forth in tears. Hooper at the first blush knew him not. Then said Master Kingston, 'Why, my lord, do you not know me, an old friend of yours, Anthony Kingston?'

"'Yes, Master Kingston, I do now know you well, and am glad to see you in health, and do praise God for the same!"

"'But I am sorry to see you in this case; for, as I understand, you be come hither to die. But (alas) consider that life is sweet, and death is bitter. Therefore, seeing life may be had, desire to live; for life hereafter may do good.'

"'Indeed it is true, Master Kingston, I am come hither to end this life, and to suffer death here, because I will not gainsay the former truth that I have theretofore taught amongst you in the diocese, and elsewhere; and I thank you for your friendly counsel, although it be not so friendly as I could have wished it. True it is, Master Kingston, that death is bitter, and life is sweet; but (alas) consider that the death to come is more bitter, and the life to come is more sweet. Therefore, for the desire and love I have to the one, and the terror and fear of the other; I do not so much regard this death, nor esteem this life, but have settled myself, through the strength of God's Holy Spirit, patiently to pass through the torments and

extremities of the fire now prepared for me, rather than to deny the truth of his word, desiring you and others, in the meantime, to commend me to God's mercy in your prayers.'

"'Well, my lord, then I perceive there is no remedy, and therefore I will take my leave of you, and I thank God that ever I knew you, for God did appoint you to call me, being a lost child: and by your good instructions, where before I was both an adulterer and a fornicator, God hath brought me to the forsaking and detesting of the same.'

"'If you have had the grace so to do, I do highly praise God for it: and if you have not, I pray God ye may have, and that you may continually live in his fear.'

"After these and many other words, the one took leave of the other: Master Kingston with bitter tears, Master Hooper with tears also trickling down his cheeks. At which departure Master Hooper told him, that all the troubles he had sustained in prison had not caused him to utter so much sorrow."

Very affecting, too, is the description of his coming, leaning on a staff, being lame with sciatica taken in his cold damp prison, to the place of his execution near to the great elm-tree, in the cathedral close, over against the College of Priests, where he was wont to preach, and where the place was so crowded with spectators, that even the boughs of the tree were filled with people. Seven thousand persons at the least were present. He turned to the crowd, and not being permitted to address them at length, owing to an order sent expressly from the Court to forbid it, he called upon the people to join him in the Lord's Prayer, and to pray for him while the agonies of death continued. He had scarcely spoken, than the voice of prayer, broken by sobs and tears, rose on every side from that immense multitude.

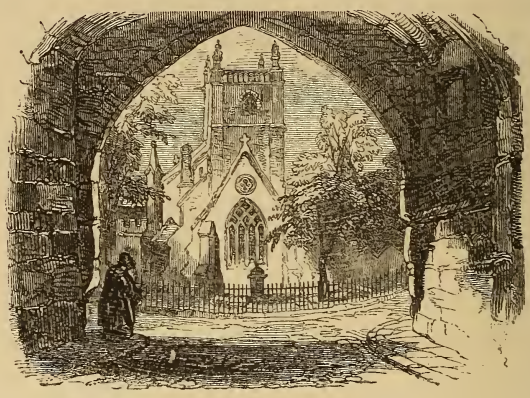
Again the bishop kneeled to pray, not being permitted to speak to the people, and beckoned six or seven times to one whom he knew well, the son of Sir Edmund Bridges, to hear his last words, that he might report them at a future time, pouring tears upon his shoulders and in his bosom. He prayed for half an hour. Part of his prayer was reported by one or two who stepped forward and heard the following words:

"Lord," said he, "I am hell, but thou art heaven; I am a swill and sink of sin, but thou art a gracious God and a merciful Redeemer. Have mercy therefore upon me, most miserable and wretched offender, after thy great mercy and according to thine inestimable goodness. Thou that art ascended into heaven, receive me to be partaker of thy joys, where thou sittest in equal glory with thy Father. For well knowest thou, Lord, wherefore I am come hither to suffer, and why the wicked do persecute this thy poor servant; not for my sins and transgressions committed against thee, but because I will not allow their wicked doings, to the contaminating of thy blood, and to the denial of the knowledge of thy truth, wherewith it did please thee by thy Holy Spirit to instruct me, the which, with as much diligence as a poor wretch might (being thereto called) I have set forth to thy glory. And well seest thou, my Lord and God, what terrible pains, and cruel torments be prepared for thy creature; such, Lord, as without thy strength none is able to bear, or patiently to pass. But all things that are impossible with men are possible with thee; therefore strengthen me of thy goodness, that in the fire I break not the rules of patience; or else assuage the terror of the pains, as shall serve more to thy glory."

This prayer was heard. The agonies he suffered were excruciating, the faggots being green. Three times the fire was kindled, and all the time his sufferings were protracted. After the fire had been kindled the third time, he wiped both his eyes with his hands, and said, "For God's love, good people, let me have more fire." All the time he continued praying, and, says Foxe, "when he was black in the mouth, and his tongue swollen that he could not speak, yet his lips went, till they were shrunk to the gums. He knocked his breast with his hands till one of his arms fell off, and then he knocked still with the other, . . . at last his strength was gone, and his hands did cleave fast in knocking to the iron band upon his breast, and immediately, bowing forward his head, he yielded up his spirit." Thus was he three-quarters of an hour or more in the fire, enduring the flame with the meekness of a lamb, dying as quietly, writes Foxe, as a child in his bed.

He had desired to die in his doublet and hose, but was ordered

to put them off: they were required by the sheriffs, being perquisites. The iron hoop had been with difficulty put on him—his body being swelled from the sciatica. When fastened to the stake, and when all was ready for his execution, a man whom he knew not, had come forward



PLACE OF HOOPER'S MARTYRDOM.

and implored his forgiveness. "For what?" said Hooper, calmly, "to my knowledge thou hast never offended me." "Oh, sir!" said the man, "I am appointed to kindle the fire!" Hooper replied, "Therein thou dost nothing to offend me; do thine office, and God forgive thee thy sins."

With a refinement of cruelty almost devilish, the queen's pardon was placed in a box upon a stool before him, when he was at the stake, but he would not bear the sight of it, and said, "If you love my soul, away with it." He was kept firm and faithful to the last, and exemplified in his death the beautiful device which he had chosen on being made Bishop of Gloucester; a lamb in a burning bush, with the sunbeams from heaven darting down upon it.

Not many years ago, the stump of the stake, and the iron hoop attached to it, were dug up on the spot where he suffered, charred and blackened by the fire, and driven deep into the earth. Who can look upon it and forget what Popery was, and what Popery still is?

John Hooper and Rowland Tayler suffered martyrdom on the same

day—the flames of their funeral pyres were lit up, at the same time in the eastern and western sides of England. They both died with an unshaken constancy, with a triumphant faith and a meek but dauntless courage. Never was there a more mistaken and miserable policy than that of the Church of Rome in ordering the deaths of these two faithful ministers. They were both men of high integrity, both distinguished preachers of God's truth, both of exemplary character in public and private life; they witnessed their good confession in the midst of a crowded assembly of those very persons among whom they had preached and lived in simple accordance to God's word, they were both not only faithful unto death, but both of them maintained a meek yet commanding dignity to the end, under all the cruel insults that were put upon them, and during the excruciating agonies which they had to suffer.

Three hundred years have nearly passed away since those two martyrs were burnt on the same day in the western and eastern counties—but the names and the stories of the two men have not been forgotten, they are, we believe, familiar as household words at this very time to the lips of the people of Gloucester and Hadleigh. Monuments have been placed over the spots where the spirit of each of those two brave witnesses went up as in a chariot of flame to His presence who is revealed to us in the Apocalypse standing in the midst of the throne, as a lamb that had been slain: there do they rest, and "they will stand in their lot at the end of the days." "I saw," said the beloved apostle, "under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held;"—"and white robes were given unto every one of them, and it was said to them that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also, and their brethren that should be killed as they were should be fulfilled."

The following letter of Hooper's pious and loving wife to his friend Bullinger, may find a fitting place after the account of his death:

MUCH HEALTH, *Frankfort, April* 11, 1555.

When I received, most loving gossip, the book of my dear husband, I desired, as he bade me by his letter, that it should be published before this

fair. For which reason I sent it to Master Peter Martyr, that he might get it done at Strasburgh. He excused himself on account of the doctrine of the eucharist, which is not received there. It might be printed here by permission of the senate; but it is better that you should first of all revise the book, and procure it to be printed yonder. But as I am well aware that his memory is most precious to you, I do not doubt but that you will be equally ready to oblige him in this matter, as if he were now alive: indeed he is alive with all the holy martyrs, and with his Christ the head of the martyrs; and I am dead here till God shall again unite me to him.

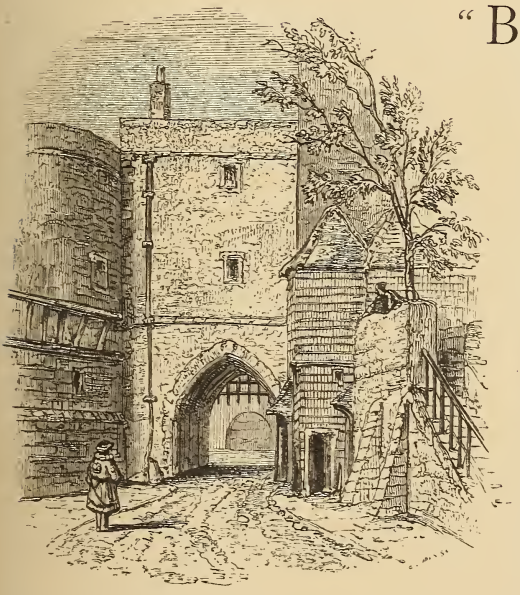
I thank you for your most godly letter. I certainly stand much in need of such consolations and of your prayers. I pray you therefore by the holy friendship of the most holy martyr, my husband, of whom being now deprived, I consider this life to be death, do not forsake me, I am not one who is able to return your kindness, but you will do an acceptable service to God, who especially commends widows to your protection. I, and my Rachel, return our thanks for the elegant new year's gift you sent us. Salute your excellent wife, my very dear gossip, and all friends. Farewell,

Your very loving gossip and sister in Christ,

ANNE HOOPER.

Hooper had been reconciled to Ridley while they were in their separate prisons. Referring to the vehement controversy respecting vestments which had been carried on between them and in immediate prospect of being united in the flames of persecution, he said, "We have been two in white; we shall be one in red;" and he wrote to him as his "dear brother, and reverend fellow-elder in Christ." To which Ridley replied, "Howsoever in times past, your wisdom and my simplicity (I grant) hath jarred, each of us following the abundance of his own sense and judgment: now, I say, be you assured that even with my whole heart, God is my witness, in the bowels of Christ, I love you, and in truth for the truth's sake, which abideth in us, and as I am persuaded, shall by the grace of God, abide with us for evermore."

THURCASTON, CAMBRIDGE, LONDON, OXFORD.



"BY yeoman's sons the faith of Christ is, and hath been maintained chiefly," —such is the assertion of honest Hugh Latimer in his first sermon before King Edward the Sixth; and in confirmation of his assertion, he adds, "Read the chronicles."—Whether he was mistaken with regard to other yeoman's sons, we know not, but he himself stood there a living proof, in his own person, of the truth of his words, and "being dead he yet speaketh," as one of the most faithful witnesses for the truth this country has produced. We have the account of his humble birth from his own lips:—

"My father was a yeoman, and had no lands of his own, only he had a farm of three or four pounds by the year at the uttermost, and hereupon he tilled as much as kept half-a-dozen men. He had a walk for a hundred sheep and my mother milked thirty kine. He was able, and did find the

king a harness with himself and his horse, and so he came to the place where he should receive the king's wages. I can remember that I buckled his harness, when he went unto Blackheath field." He goes on to say, "My father kept me to school, or else I had not been able to preach before the king's majesty now. He married my sisters with five pounds, or twenty nobles apiece, and he brought them up in godliness and fear of God. He kept hospitality for his poor neighbours, and some alms he gave to the poor. And all this he did on the same farm."

Let me take you with me, my reader, to the retired village of Thurcaston, where this honest and loyal yeoman followed his lowly calling. I think you will feel an interest in all that relates to good old Hugh Latimer, the apostle of England, as he was called, at the time of the Reformation; and be pleased to see the home of his early years, to which he referred with the warm affection of his simple heart, when preaching before the king and the great ones of the world. There stands the village church, an old and venerable building, rich in ancient and modern monumental inscriptions, and the font is still to be seen in which Hugh Latimer was baptised. In those days the village of Thurcaston, which is almost encircled by gentle hills, stood in the midst of Charnwood Forest, and every approach to the village was by some leafy forest glade: it is now surrounded by fields and hedgerow trees, and is both a corn and pasture district, the forest ground being a mile and a half distant. In former times the forest of Charnwood was very extensive and remarkable, and occupied a space of five-and-twenty miles in circuit. It was famous for falconry, and abounded with various kinds of birds, some of them rarely found in this country. Its botany and geology are still remarkable. There is a mountainous character about those naked hills, once clothed with wood, suited to the romance of monastic times,—an inducement probably to those who have chosen the site of a modern monastery in a natural amphitheatre of these rugged rocks. We should not be sorry to hear of a Hooper or a Latimer coming forth from among the monks of Mount St. Bernard, and shaking off the trammels of papal superstition and papal supremacy. Perhaps there is not among the brotherhood a more zealous Romanist than the yeoman's son of the neighbouring village of Thurcaston

LATIMER'S BIRTHPLACE.

once was. He would have gone to them, had he been now on earth, with the Holy Bible, and said, "Follow this word, and come to Christ; look not to many mediators, but to one—to Christ, and Him alone, for life and peace."

There is perhaps the most extensive prospect in England from the summit of Bardon Hill in Charnwood Forest; Lincoln cathedral, sixty miles off, is seen to the east; Dunstable hills, eighty miles off, on the south; and, towards the west and north, the Malvern hills, the Wrekin in Shropshire, and some of the summits of the mountains in Wales. There are the ruins also of another abbey, or rather nunnery, in a lovely and secluded spot, in the centre of this once extensive forest—that of Grace Dieu.

But let us leave Charnwood Forest and drop down to the quiet village of Thurcaston itself. How pretty and how pleasant is an English village! its shady lanes, its strips of emerald grass along the road side; its hedgerow banks, thick set with the clustering flowers of the primrose, or odorous with the sweet breath of the violet—its spreading hawthorn-bushes in full luxuriance of milk-white blossoms, and here and there an old and stately tree stretching its canopy of shade and shelter across the sandy roadway; perhaps a rivulet gurgling or tinkling over its pebbly bed, and catching at intervals some sparkles of sunny light upon its rippling surface, as it flows on, half hidden by the foliage to which it gives a fresher greenness and a richer growth; its cottages, some grouped together, others wide apart, their white walls and thatched roofs embowered by the treasured fruit-trees of the small trim garden, which is seldom without its knot of sweet old English garden-flowers and pot-herbs under the casement-windows, that the bees may not have too far to ramble from the row of hives on the sunny side of the quickset-hedge, and that the children may take a posy of roses, and sweet-briar, and gillyflowers, and lemon-thyme to the Sunday-school. And then the fine substantial farm-house, with its solid beams and its broad gables, and its old-fashioned porch, half covered with the mantling foliage of the vine, and its wide and well-littered farmyard, where the cattle are folded and the poultry fed, and where order so often looks like disorder, because honest labour is always busied there.

Close at hand is Bradgate Park, a favourite spot to those who love the memory of the sweet and pious Jane Grey; for there her early years were passed, and there it was that Roger Ascham found the lovely and youthful lady reading Plato in Greek, while the duke and duchess, her parents, and the rest of the household, were merry with their sports and pastime in the park, leaving the house empty, save of the presence of her who was its fairest ornament; and there she told him how it was she came to love her studies better than the pleasures of that noble circle in which she was bred.

But we must leave Thurcaston, and follow Hugh Latimer to the stirring scenes of his grown-up life, and of his hoar and venerable age, those scenes in which the yeoman's son played a noble part.

HUGH LATIMER.

Hugh Latimer had a manly training in his boyhood, which told afterwards upon his manhood. "My father taught me how to draw the bow," he says, in one of his sermons before Edward the Sixth, "he taught me how to lay my body in the bow, and not to draw with strength of arms, as other nations do, but with the strength of the body. I had my bows brought me according to my age and strength; as I increased in them, my

bows were made bigger and bigger; for men shall never shoot well, except they be brought up in it. It is a goodly art, a wholesome kind of exercise, and much commended in physic." It was with a strong faith that this true hero—after he had learnt the use of those weapons which are not carnal, but mighty through God—drew his bow at a venture, and pierced through the armour of the Man of Sin, and wielded the two-edged sword of the Spirit, and fought the good fight of faith, and by the grace of God he has won for himself a name which will never be forgotten while there are any to fill the ranks of Christ's true Church in England, as good soldiers enduring hardship. For the Church of Christ, while on earth, has always been a church militant against error and sin of every form and kind.

"Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord," this exhortation seemed ever present to the mind of Hugh Latimer. Honest Hugh Latimer was the name he honestly won. In simplicity and godly sincerity he went bravely on his way. It was a rough way, but he went straight forward, over the rugged rocks, and through the thorny brakes; and though the rocks were rough to the end, and the briars set thick with thorns, his feet got hardened as the feet of wayfaring men will do by much travelling in such a pathway. God gave him a portion of his Master's resolute spirit to set his face like a flint, and to bear up with a dauntless and cheerful endurance, when the cold and cutting blast and the driving sleet of man's unkindness met him full in the face. He was plain in speech, plain in manners, plain in dress, and plain in his dealings with God's word and the souls of men.

He had trials to bear also from the sunshine of prosperity and worldly advancement. A short season, but a bright one, of royal patronage and rare favour with the highest and noblest in the realm twice opened upon him, and the silken entanglements of courtly distinction were twined about him; a bondage from which most men find it more difficult to free themselves than from fetters of iron; but they were to him as the green withs by which Delilah had bound Samson, and he brake them as a thread of tow is broken when it touches the fire.

At an early age Hugh Latimer had shown signs of a superior understanding, and his worthy parents had determined to give him a good

education. They had six daughters, but Hugh was their only son, and he was sent to the grammar-school at Leicester, and from school, when he was fourteen, he proceeded to the University of Cambridge. There he made diligent use of his time, was studious, and read much; but he looked with equal reverence upon the inspired Scriptures and the useless divinity of the schoolmen, holding Thomas à Becket and the apostles in equal honour. He grew up, as might be expected, a narrow-minded and zealous papist. He took the usual degrees and entered the ministry, and became notorious for his unwearied opposition to "*the new learning*," for so the old doctrines of the reformed faith were then termed. In the oration which he made upon taking his degree of Bachelor of Divinity, he attacked Melancthon with great boldness, and he openly opposed an excellent and godly man, "Good Master Stafford," as Foxe calls him, who was the Divinity Lecturer. Latimer saw with horror the effect of Stafford's teaching upon the younger members of the university; for he set before them the sound principles of the word of God, and he took care to be present when Stafford lectured, and would then call upon the students to give no credit to their teacher's heresies, and exhort them not to give heed to so pernicious a teacher. His zeal in the wrong cause attracted the notice of those in power, and he was made cross-keeper to the university, and carried the cross with much reverence in their processions.

Who could have supposed that the blinded and inveterate popish cross-bearer, would become one of the most enlightened and single-minded of the great reformers of our Church. He thought that he should certainly escape damnation if he could only become a friar, and that it was the height of impiety even to question the pope's infallibility. But he was always an honest man; what he did, he did with all his heart; he was never for half-measures, but went boldly on in the course which appeared to him the right course. There must have been a manly simplicity of purpose, and an ingenuous spirit evident in the proceedings of Latimer, even when he laboured most diligently to overturn the truth, and spread the fatal errors which he had imbibed; for about this time a deep interest was awakened for him in the heart of one of the most gentle and lovely Christian characters resident at the university. Thomas

Bilney had some time before become a convert to the reformed faith. He had heard the oration against Melancthon, and quietly but closely he marked and studied the spirit of the honest-hearted, but superstitious Latimer. With the calm and judicious wisdom for which he was noted, he sought an opportunity of bringing the truths of the gospel of the grace of God before the man who so deeply excited his interest. This good man was one of those exemplary disciples of our Lord, who evidence by the mild and loving influence of their life and doctrine, the truth of that beautiful Bible proverb—"He that winneth souls is wise." In the statements which he brought before Latimer, the arguments which he adopted, and the persuasions with which he made his appeal to the conscience and the heart of his single-minded hearer, he was perfectly successful. He was thus made the instrument of his friend's conversion. Latimer was convinced—he threw down the weapons of his opposition to the truth, and like another bold and fierce persecutor of the saints, the anxious question of his contrite and subdued spirit became, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do." It was soon found, both by the Papists and the Reformers at Cambridge, that he which had persecuted in times past, now preached the faith he once destroyed. He went also to Master Stafford before he died, and begged his forgiveness.

The conversion of one who had taken so prominent a part in the proceedings of the popish party at the university, soon became a source of great provocation to his former associates. Latimer was no longer a young man. He was a thoughtful, learned, and experienced convert, and the decision which he had made was the result of calm and deliberate conviction. He who had before carried aloft the ornamented and material cross in the gorgeous ceremonies of the heretical Church of Rome, had now become the cross-bearer in sad earnest. He had taken up his spiritual cross, and made up his mind to bear it with resolute and unflinching courage, and to follow the Lord Jesus even to the Calvary of shame and death. He cultivated the friendship not only of Bilney, but of every one of the reformed party, and was in frequent consultation with them; conferring with them on the errors of his former views, and meekly asking to be taught the truth as it is in Jesus. But it was not to man that

he looked. His spirit had received that anointing which "is truth, and is no lie," and he knew that the teaching which he needed was not man's teaching. Since it had pleased God to call him by His grace, and to reveal His Son in him, that he might preach Him, his conference was not with flesh and blood. He became a diligent, pains-taking, and patient searcher of Holy Scripture, and he found the truth, as he sought it, with the simplicity of a child, upon his knees. In this spirit, with the word of God in his heart, and in his hands, he went forth, not only into the streets and lanes of Cambridge, but into all the neighbouring villages, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, in the plain homely English, which the people were accustomed to speak among themselves; not confining himself, however, to this one good way, but frequently discoursing with the learned, in Latin, in the tongue of the learned, yet always holding forth the word of life as the only lamp to the feet and light to the path of the Christian pilgrim; everywhere preaching Christ crucified; everywhere insisting on the necessity of a holy life, as the only sure evidence of a state of salvation; everywhere exposing the vanity and folly of a mere formal and ceremonial religion.

His heart was full of pity for his poor and ignorant countrymen; enthralled as they were by the wretched superstitions of Popery. He prayed for, and preached to them, earnestly desiring to see them delivered from bondage. He had been once in the same state, his spirit had been also bound, his eyes had been also blinded. He could feel for, and pity them, as only one could do who had been himself in the same piteous condition. His preaching might be likened to the testimony of the man who, when restored to sight by our Lord, had said, "This one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see;" and with all the joyful gladness of one restored to sight, he pointed to the Sun of righteousness as the only source of his new sense of happiness. Three years were thus spent by this enlightened convert. "Master Latimer," we are told, "through his daily and indefatigable searching of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, had made himself a most complete master of all the arguments proper to confute the then reigning errors of the Church of Rome; and he set himself about exposing them in the most public manner

he possibly could." This he did in a strange quaint fashion, partly peculiar to the manners of those days, and partly to his own quaint and original turn of mind. In his sermons he was by turns argumentative, imaginative, fanciful; now pathetic, then witty, and even humorous; sometimes dealing forth the most sharp and cutting rebukes; sometimes breathing forth the most gentle or affecting remonstrances. He illustrated the truths he taught by striking and familiar stories; mixing up severity with sweetness, terrors with tenderness. But through all his sermons, strong manly sense is conspicuous;—in all his sermons, he preached Christ and the principles and practice of the truth as it is in Jesus, with pure and scriptural clearness.

The effect of Latimer's preaching was soon found throughout the university, and so great a commotion was raised that the attention of the bishop was called to the sermons of this advocate of Scriptural truth. Dr. West, bishop of Ely, came suddenly and unexpectedly to the university church of St. Mary's when Latimer had already proceeded some way in his sermon. The preacher paused till the bishop and his attendants had taken their places; and then with a short and respectful introduction, in which allusion was made to the presence of the bishop, Latimer gave out another text, and proceeded to set forth Jesus Christ as the true pattern of a Christian bishop. At the conclusion of the sermon, the bishop "being a very wise and politique worldly man," called Latimer to him, and said, "Master Latimer, I heartily thank you for your good sermon, assuring you that if you will do one thing at my request, I will kneel down and kiss your foot for the good admonitions I have received of your sermon, assuring you that I never heard mine office so well and so substantially declared before this time." "What is your lordship's pleasure that I should do for you?" quoth Master Latimer. "Marry," quoth the bishop, "that you will preach me in this place one sermon against Martin Luther and his doctrine." To this Latimer plainly replied, "that he was not acquainted with the doctrine of Luther, neither were they at Cambridge permitted to read his works; and that what he had preached was no man's doctrine, but the doctrine of God out of the Scriptures. If Luther do none otherwise than I have done," he con-

tinued, "there needeth no confutation of his doctrine. Otherwise, when I understand that he doth teach against the Scriptures, I will be ready, with all my heart, to confound his doctrine as much as lieth in me." "Well, well, Master Latimer," replied the bishop, "I perceive that you somewhat smell of the pan; you will repent this gear one day." From that time the bishop forbade Latimer to preach in any of the university churches. But Dr. Barnes, the prior of the Augustines invited him to preach in the church of his priory,* which was exempt from episcopal authority, and there the bishop was on several occasions among his hearers, and declared him to be the most powerful preacher he had ever heard.

Some of the most violent of the papists of the university now came forward, one Master Tyrrell, a Fellow of King's College, being their leader, to lodge a formal complaint against Latimer, accusing him of preaching false doctrine and infecting the youth of the university with Luther's opinions, and Latimer was summoned to York House to answer the complaint before Cardinal Wolsey. A graphic account is given † of Latimer's interview with the celebrated cardinal. From the inner chamber where Wolsey sat, the ringing of his little bell was heard to summon Latimer and his accusers to the cardinal's presence. Wolsey was struck by the "good years" and the grave and sober demeanour of Latimer, and expressed his surprise that such an accusation could be brought against him, and that so staid a person could be infected with the new fantastical doctrines of Luther and such like heretics. The plain straightforward answer of Latimer is given, and then follows the further questioning of the cardinal, both of Latimer and the two doctors, Dr. Capon and Dr. Marshall, who had come up from Cambridge as the accusers of the reformer. "Then," said Mr. Latimer again, "your grace is misinformed; for I ought to have some more knowledge than to be so simply reported of; by reason that I have studied in my time both of the ancient doctors of the Church, and also of the school-doctors." "Marry, that is well said," quoth the cardinal; "I am glad to hear that of you; and therefore," quoth the

* This is the old church adjoining Barnwell Abbey.

† See *Latimer's first conversion at Cambridge*, drawn up by Ralph Morrice, Cranmer's secretary.—Strype, Harl. MS., published by the Parker Society.

cardinal, "Master Doctor Capon, and you, Master Doctor Marshall, say you somewhat to Mr. Latimer touching some question in Dunce."* Whereupon Dr. Capon propounded a question to Master Latimer. But Master Latimer, being fresh then of memory, and not discontinued from study, as those two doctors had been, answered very roundly; somewhat helping them to cite their own allegations rightly where they had not truly or

CARDINAL WOLSEY.

perfectly alleged them. On this the cardinal, perceiving the ripe and ready answering of Latimer, said, "What mean you, my masters, to bring such a man before me into accusation? I had thought that he had been some lightheaded fellow, that never studied such kind of doctrine, as the school-doctors are."

"I pray thee," said the cardinal, "tell me why the Bishop of Ely and others do mislike thy proceedings; tell me the truth." Latimer then told him plainly, "that ever since he had preached before the bishop on the office and duties of a bishop, taking for his text, 'Christ being come, an

* Duns Scotus.

High Priest of things to come,' the Bishop of Ely could never abide him." The cardinal, on hearing this, said, "I pray you tell me what thou didst preach before him on this text."

Then Latimer, committing his cause to God, plainly and simply declared unto the cardinal the whole substance of the sermon. The cardinal, nothing at all misliking the doctrine of the Word of God that Latimer had preached, said unto him, "Did you not preach any other doctrine than you have rehearsed?" "No, surely," said Latimer. Then examining thoroughly, with the doctors, what else could be objected against him, the cardinal said unto Master Latimer, "If the Bishop of Ely cannot abide such doctrine as you have here repeated, you shall have my license, and shall preach it unto his beard, let him say what he will;" and thereupon, after a gentle monition, given to Master Latimer, the cardinal discharged him with his license hence to preach throughout England."

When Latimer came back to Cambridge, every one supposed he had been utterly put to silence, but he appeared in the pulpit on the first holiday after his return, and showed his license. After the cardinal fell under the king's displeasure, the report was set abroad that Master Latimer's license was extinct. This report he answered from the pulpit, saying, "Ye think that my license decayeth with my lord cardinal's temporal fall. I take it nothing so; for he being, I trust, reconciled to God from his pomps and vanities, I now set more by his license than ever I did before when he was in his most felicity."

Latimer and his beloved friend and father in the faith, Bilney, continued to go forward in their great work at Cambridge. They were now marked men, and were constantly together consulting how they might best advance the progress of the truth. Dr. Barnes, the prior and master of the abbey of the Augustines, was at that time one of the finest scholars in the university. His house was the resort of those students who were distinguished by their thirst for knowledge and their pains-taking diligence: Coverdale was among the number. Barnes had introduced the study of classical learning, which had been scarcely known or followed in Cambridge—all being (as we are told) rudeness and barbarity; and after having called the attention of his pupils to Terence, Cicero, and

other profane authors, he put aside Scotus and Aquinas, and the doctors of the schools, and read openly in his house the Epistles of Paul, and thus many good divines were trained under his teaching.

His opponent in the University schools, on his taking his degree of Bachelor of Divinity, was the Master Stafford already mentioned, of whom Becon speaks in his "Jewel of Joy." "He was a man of a very perfect life, of an angelic conversation, approvedly learned in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin tongues, and such a one as had through his powerful labours, obtained singular knowledge in the mysteries of God's most blessed word. He did cast away profane and old wives' fables, and as the good servant of Jesus Christ, he exercised himself unto godliness. He was gentle unto every man, and with meekness informed them that resisted the truth. His disputation with Dr. Barnes, was marvellous in the sight of the great blind doctors, and joyful to the godly spirited."

But though Barnes was thus becoming mighty in the Scriptures, by his reading and disputation and preaching—opposing superstition and hypocrisy from his own pulpit, he was as yet a Romanist, till the blessed Master Bilney, with others (Latimer doubtless among them) were made the instruments of converting him wholly to Christ. And here it may not be altogether out of place to mention, that when in the year of our Lord 1525, Dr. Barnes preached his first sermon, after he had become a Protestant, in St. Edward's Church, the Sunday before Christmas-day, taking for his text the epistle of the day, from the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice," the clear Scriptural character of his sermon was so remarkable that he was immediately accused of heresy by two Fellows of King's Hall; and then, for the first time, the faithful followers of Christ, among the members of the University, came forward in a body and openly avowed themselves as with one accord. They came forth from St. John's College, from Pembroke, Peterhouse, King's, Queen's, Gonvill and Benet,—all these men were the lovers of truth, and opposers of error and vain traditions; and they together now assembled in the schools and in St. Mary's in open day, making no longer any secret of the views they held, but confessing Christ as

set forth in the Holy Scriptures, to be the only author and finisher of their faith. It was a great day for the University when this remarkable awakening occurred; and that sermon by Dr. Barnes seemed to act as a sign and a summons to the little band of Christ's true followers to appear. The Heretic's Hill, the favourite resort of Bilney and Latimer, was not now regarded as the only infected spot, but the White Horse,* which is described as being so situated that the men of King's and of Queen's College came in on the back of the house, was the place where these godly men assembled, and the name of Germany was given to it by way of derision of the great German Reformers, who held the same Scriptural faith.

Latimer went on his way with the same resolute spirit, boldly proclaiming the truth to all classes. His sermons raised fresh opposition and caused new disputings between the two opposing parties, which rose to such a height of violence, that the rumour of them reached the Court. Dr. Fox the Provost of King's College, and the royal almoner wrote to the vice-chancellor to make a formal complaint and to acquaint him, that unless the university exerted itself to put a stop to the disputation between Master Latimer and others, the king himself intended to set some order therein. The vice-chancellor forthwith appointed a day on which any person who had any thing to lay to Latimer's charge, might come forward—declaring at the same time, that the accusation should be heard, and justice done to the aggrieved party. No one, however, thought fit to answer the call. The vice-chancellor summoned Latimer and the opposing party before the Senate, and commanded both parties, on pain of excommunication, to abstain from their disputations from the pulpit, and all other causes of offence. It appears from the letter of Dr. Fox and the speech of the vice-chancellor, that Latimer was the injured party, and that he was prepared to give every reasonable explanation, and that his adversaries had been actuated by "private malice towards him."

* The White Horse was in Trumpington Street, opposite Bennet Street. It was pulled down to make room for the improvement at King's College. The Castle Hill, from whence there is an extensive view, was probably "The Heretic's Hill."

There is a little dark church in Cambridge—it stands back, surrounded by houses, somewhere between the Pease-market and St. Mary's Church. It is ancient enough, but remarkable for nothing grand or graceful in its architecture. Its interior is dull and dingy, and it is not unlike some of the old prints of the ordinary churches of those days. There it was that Latimer preached.

As I stood in Latimer's pulpit, and looked round upon the old walls of that dark quiet church, the scenes of those stormy days rose up before me—when college dignitaries, and youthful undergraduates, and frocked and cowled ecclesiastics of various orders, and the town's-people of all ranks and trades, were crowded together, with all their eyes turned towards that same pulpit; and where the preacher looked down upon a mingled mass of lovers and adversaries of the truths he boldly set forth, indifferent alike to the praise or blame of man, and intent only on delivering his own soul and the souls of those who heard him. There was the up-turned face of Bilney, beaming with goodness and sweetness, while perchance a tear or two trickled down even to his beard, as he silently exclaimed, "What hath God wrought!"—and there, right opposite the preacher, was the sharp visage and the darting eyes of the Prior Buckenham, half shrouded by his black cowl, while conflicting feelings of bitter irony and defeated malice compressed his lips, and contracted his darkened brow; and there was Dr. Barnes (himself also a monk, for he was Prior of the Augustines), with a look of mingled surprise and delight on his mild countenance, the index of the state of his mind, as the true doctrines of our holy faith opened more brightly and clearly, like light from heaven, upon him.

There is much, not only to offend the fastidious, but to jar with the fine harmonies of an elegant taste and a disciplined mind in the sermons of Latimer. He was not only a man drawn from the ruder rank of society, but he had been accustomed to contrast the effect produced by the sermons preached by the friars on their hearers, with the laboured and lifeless discourses of scholastic theologians; and he naturally adopted the notion that the style which told most forcibly upon the heart of the hearer, and penetrated most piercingly into the

very marrow of the conscience, was the best adapted to the pulpit of a preacher of God's plain truth. His countrymen too, of all ranks in those days, were accustomed to use language in their intercourse with one another, very different from that of the present day. Language which to us at the present time seems coarse, even to grossness, was then the common parlance from the Court to the shop-board.

Cranmer was well aware that Latimer carried his strong quaint expressions to an excess which would be likely to offend the more refined of his hearers : and when, at Cranmer's special recommendation, Latimer, was called upon to preach before the king, queen, and Court, Cranmer wrote to him an admirable letter of advice on the subject, which is to be found in the Lansdowne manuscripts. He cautioned him not to be personal in his attacks, so that he might seem to slander his adversaries, or to appear void of charity; but added, "Nevertheless, if such occasion be given by the word of God, let none offence be unreprehended, especially if it be generally spoken."

Latimer's figures are strange and quaint—his language often rude and offensive to good taste—his illustrations sometimes far-fetched, and we can scarcely see the reference they bear to the subject; but what of that!—there is the fire of Divine light and life in those remarkable sermons, there are grand clear statements of the apostolic doctrines such as no man has excelled him in giving. There are appeals to the conscience, searching and startling to a marvel—there are warnings earnest and solemn as from one who stood in the very presence of the Judge and saw the earth open and hell yawning beneath the feet of his hearers—there is love gushing warm from a heart that overflowed with love to Christ and to the souls of men.

It was under the thrilling eloquence of one of these wondrous sermons that Bradford, "that holy man," as Latimer terms him, first trembled and confessed himself a lost and guilty sinner, and cried to God for pardon through the blood of His own blessed and anointed Son. The arrow had entered the heart of the earnest hearer, and like the stricken deer, he left the herd, and he knew no rest till he had sought and found it in Christ, and in that repentance which is the gift of God, and the fruit of faith

in Christ, a repentance whereby sin is forsaken, and in which the heart is softened and prepared to receive the seed of the word.

It was also under Latimer's preaching that Becon, as he himself tells us, when a youthful student of St. John's College, Cambridge, first yielded to the gospel truth. Becon speaks of his obligations to Master George Stafford of Pembroke Hall, but he was a diligent hearer of Latimer, and he says, "To him, next unto God, I am most especially bound to give most hearty thanks for the knowledge, if I have any, of God, and of His most blessed word."

All men saw in him at all times the power and the beauty of truth—a manly dignity, a godly simplicity, very rare in this ungodly and deceitful world. Latimer could never be overlooked, though no man sought less the notice or the praise of men. They saw a man of decision—plain of speech, blunt perhaps in manner—but at the same time, of a tender loving spirit, "an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile." After he had resigned his bishopric, and retired into private life, the people still greeted him with the title of lord, for they rejoiced to pay him honour, and he was the favourite even of the boys in the street, who cheered him as he approached his ever-popular pulpit, with some hearty word of encouragement, to "say on."*

It was at this time that Latimer preached his strange but celebrated card sermons. A game of cards is an extraordinary subject for the pulpit, but quaint illustrations were as attractive as they were common then. The preaching friars had gained the ears of the people by such strange addresses, and Latimer did more, he won the heart to Christ by them, and drew away his hearers from "the stinking puddles of human traditions," as they are called in the Homilies, to the pure and living springs which are opened to us in the oracles of God.

The popish party had risen in arms against Latimer and his sermons. Dr. Buckenham, the prior of the Black Friars, had first appeared in the lists, and in the same quaint style of illustration, he had come forward to oppose Latimer. He brought dice to meet the cards of the Protestant preacher, but had managed the strange conceit in a very bungling manner,

* Blunt.

wanting the wit and point of Latimer, and making an unfortunate choice of the subject which he sought to illustrate—namely, the utter inexpediency of permitting the Scriptures to be read by the people, or preached to them in the vulgar tongue. We give the following specimen: "If the ploughman should hear this in the Gospel, that 'no man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God,' he would cease from his plough; the baker in like manner, learning that a little leaven will corrupt a large lump of dough, will, peradventure leave our bread unleavened; a simple man, too, taking literally the precept, 'If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee,' might make himself blind, and so fill the world with beggars." Such were the points, brought forward by this learned friar to prove the danger of giving the English Bible to the people.

Latimer had been present at the preaching of this egregiously absurd sermon. The prior of the Black Friars was not like Latimer, a man to turn the world upside down. He occupied the same pulpit that afternoon in which his opponent had preached in the morning. With the ease of a master, Latimer exposed the weak arguments of the learned papist, and went on to show how common and how admirable is the use made in Scripture of such figures of speech as those which Buckenham had stated to be so dangerous. He bade his hearers to consider how commonly the various trades were accustomed to have certain devices painted on the sign-board over their shop doors, and he asked them if they had ever found any difficulty in making out the meaning of the sign, and seeing in it a plain signification of what was intended by it. No one could suppose, he said, applying the same argument to preaching, that signs and figures were not very useful in making the truths under them more apparent. No one could suppose, for instance, when a fox was spoken of, preaching under a friar's cowl, that the preacher intended to speak of a real fox, or to assert that the fox was accustomed to preach; but that he was describing under that figure, the craft, dissimulation, and hypocrisy to be found too often under a friar's cowl. No wonder the eyes of all present were then involuntarily turned to the Black Friar who was conspicuously present, right oppo-

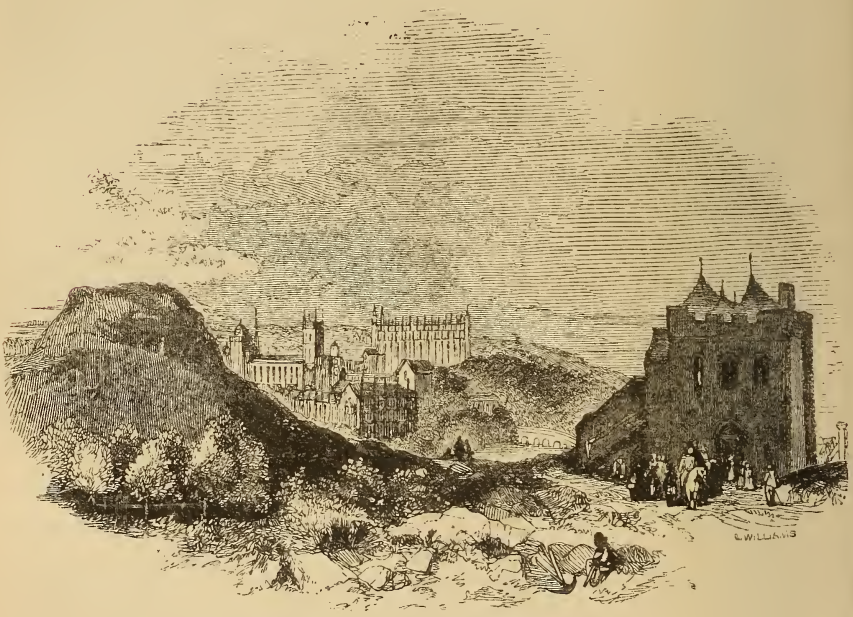
site the preacher, and it was obvious to all where the cowl, or rather the cap, fitted.

Another adversary, one Dr. Venutus, a Grey Friar, was so much irritated by this sermon of Latimer's, that in "his brawling sermons," to use the words of Foxe, he railed and raged against Master Latimer, calling him a mad and brainless man. But Latimer had the truth on his side, and a stout heart, and sound arguments to maintain it. With gravity, and dignity, with forcible reasoning, and in a scholastic manner, Latimer came forward to defend himself against the coarse and senseless invectives of his assailant. Dr. Venutus quitted the University, and Dr. Buckenham did not venture to renew the attack. Well might it be said by Becon, "There is a common saying which remaineth unto this day: 'When Master Stafford read, and Master Latimer preached, then was Cambridge blessed.'"

In the month after these occurrences, the name of Latimer appeared in the list of the members of the university—appointed by grace of the Senate, to define and determine, on behalf of Cambridge, as to the lawfulness of the king's marriage with Catherine of Arragon, and on the propriety of a divorce. The decision of the University was given on the 9th of March, 1530; and Latimer was called on the Sunday following to preach before Henry the Eighth at Windsor. The king was reported to have greatly praised Master Latimer's sermon; and 5*l.* were given to the preacher for his sermon.

At the conclusion, the king called for the preacher, and entered into discourse with him on the subject of his sermon; and Latimer availed himself of this opportunity to prefer a petition to Henry. Kneeling before the king, he requested a free pardon from his Majesty's hand, for a poor woman, then a prisoner under sentence of death, for the supposed murder of her child in Cambridge Castle. He and Bilney had been for some time accustomed to visit the prisoners in the castle; and had been led to conclude, that she was innocent of the crime for which she was condemned. They set before her so effectually the efficacy of the precious blood of Jesus Christ, that their efforts were blessed to her conversion. When she had been brought under God to a clear knowledge of the truth, Latimer produced the king's pardon, and she was restored to liberty.

After his return to Cambridge, Master Latimer was selected as one of the twelve best learned men in divinity within that University, who, according to the King's command were sent to London to meet a like number of divines from Oxford, that they might consult together as to the prohibition of the Scriptures and other books to be read in English; and



ANCIENT VIEW OF CAMBRIDGE.[1]

a royal proclamation followed confirming the prohibition. But Latimer wrote immediately to the king, and told him plainly that he and three or four others did not concur in the prohibition, and implored that he would order the Scriptures to go forth in English.

We give part of this letter from Latimer to the king.

"He who for fear of any power," to use the words of Augustine, "hides the truth, provokes the wrath of God to come upon him, for he fears men more than God."

"Chrysostom saith," he continued, "that he is not only a traitor to the truth who openly for truth teaches a lie, but he also who does not freely pronounce and show the truth that he knows. These sentences, most redoubted king, when I read them now of late, and marked them earnestly in the inward parts of my heart, made me sore afraid; troubled, and vexed me grievously in my conscience, and at the last drove me to this strait, that I must either show forth such things as I have read and learned in Scripture, or else be of those who provoke the wrath of God upon them, and are traitors unto the truth; the which, rather than it should happen, I would prefer to suffer extreme punishment."

"Wherefore, gracious king, remember yourself, have pity on your soul, and think the day is even at hand when you shall give an account of your office, and of the blood that hath been shed with your sword. In that day, that your grace may stand stedfastly, and not be ashamed, but be clear and ready in your reckoning, and have (as they say) your *quietus est*, sealed with the blood of our Saviour Christ, which only serveth at that day, is my daily prayer to Him that suffered death for our sins, and who also prayeth to his Father for grace for us continually. To whom be all honour and praise for ever. Amen. The Spirit of God preserve your grace."

The king took no offence it seems at this faithful remonstrance. Latimer was appointed one of the royal chaplains, and was high in favour with Anne Boleyn. One of his most zealous friends was the excellent Dr. Buttes, the king's physician, in whose chambers he dwelt during his stay in London, and often preached. A great man, we are told, on his first coming to court, admonished him to beware that he "contraried not the king:" but what distinguished Latimer throughout the whole course of his life, was a godly fearlessness of consequences. To see a thing to be right, and to do it at once, was the principle and the practice of this remarkable man. No one perhaps was ever less dazzled by the circumstances of wealth, or power, or high authority, than Hugh Latimer. His secret walk was with Him who, though he is "King of kings and Lord of lords," "made himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant;" and the glory of his presence put

out the lights of all worldly glory, so that he was as one who saw it not. He was probably soon wearied with the intrigues and the profligacy of a court—with the falsehood and the flattery which he witnessed in so many, and glad to escape to the more healthy atmosphere of a country parish; and when the living of West Kington in Wiltshire was presented to him, Latimer at once quitted the court, and set off to devote himself to the charge of his country parish.

Latimer did not confine his labours as a preacher to his own parish; but, having a license from his University to preach throughout the whole of England, he went everywhere, in that part of the country, preaching the word. The miraculous blood of Hales, a place near West Kington, drew crowds of pilgrims to witness the pretended miracle, and Latimer's bold and fearless attacks on the imposture, gave great provocation to the Romanists. The fraud was afterwards fully exposed, as may be seen in Latimer's sermons and letters.

In this blessed work Latimer delighted, and for it he was eminently qualified. He felt the need of unwearied diligence in opposing the efforts of the Evil One, and he endeavoured, by putting forth every active energy in his power, to do so. We learn in his own words his sense of the need of constant vigilance and ceaseless efforts in the work of the ministry. "There is one," said he, "that is the most diligent prelate and preacher in all England, and will ye know who it is? I will tell you. It is the devil. He is the most diligent preacher of all others, he is never out of his diocese, he is never from his cure, ye shall never find him unoccupied; he is ever in his parish, he keepeth residence at all times, ye shall never find him out of the way, call for him when you will, he is ever at home, the diligentest preacher in all the realm, he is ever at his plough, neither lordling nor loitering can hinder him, he is ever applying his business, ye shall never find him idle, I warrant you. But his office is to hinder religion, to maintain superstition, to set up idolatry, to teach all kind of Popery:—where the devil is resident, that he may prevail, he adds with all superstition and idolatry, censing, painting of images, candles, palms, ashes, holy water, and new services of man's inventing, as though man could invent

a better way to honour God with, than God himself hath appointed. 'Down with Christ's cross : up with men's traditions and his laws, down with God's traditions and his most holy word.'" We may easily conceive from this language, that so bold and uncompromising a preacher as Latimer would give intolerable offence to those who loved darkness rather than light, and preferred error to truth.

Attempts were made, but in vain, to silence the honest and plain-spoken Reformer. "His diligence was so great, his preaching so mighty, the manner of his teaching so zealous," that it was not to be borne, and at last a solemn charge was drawn up against him and laid before Stokesley, bishop of London. It was instantly attended to, and Latimer was cited to appear before him. He appealed to his own ordinary, the Chancellor of the Diocese of Sarum, and then a citation was obtained from the archbishop's court, and Latimer was required to come up to London, and answer to the charges brought against him. His friends advised him to fly from the danger that seemed to await him; but Latimer determined to comply at once to the citation of the archbishop. Without delay he set out for London in the depth of winter, when suffering under a severe fit of the stone and colic, thinking less of his own personal peril than of leaving his beloved flock without a shepherd and exposed to the popish clergy, who would, he feared, gladly avail themselves of his absence to undo the work he had commenced among his people.

He was now brought into a situation of imminent danger, but he met it with his usual courage. He would not yield, but maintained, in his appeal to Archbishop Warham, that he thought preaching was the best way to amend the abuses and errors which then commonly prevailed. He begged to be excused signing the articles, which had been proposed to him, declaring plainly that he never would abet superstition. He begged the archbishop to excuse what he had written, adding that he knew his duty to his superiors, and would practise it, but stronger obligation was now laid upon him.

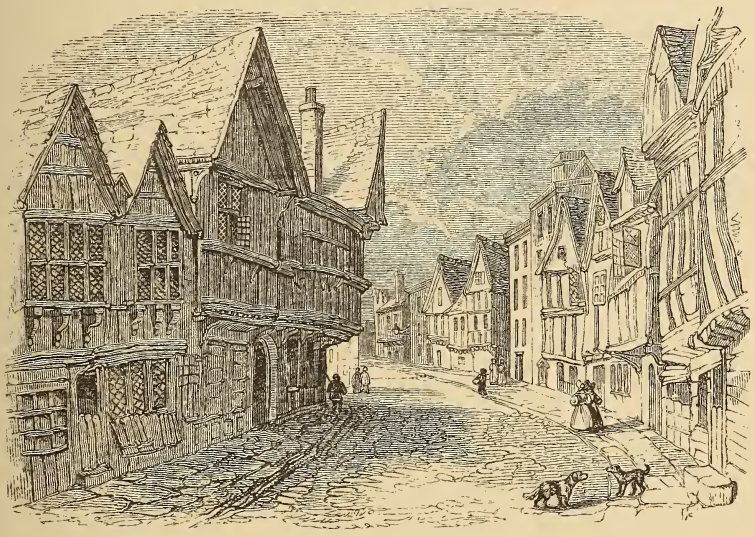
Latimer was kept a long time in London, away from his own cure, and "greatly molested;" he was excommunicated and even imprisoned

for a short time, and only at the special request of the king was the sentence of excommunication removed, and he was permitted to return to his parish. The following year saw Hugh Latimer in fresh trouble. A formal complaint was brought against his preaching, by one Richard Brown, a priest of Bristol, and then followed a host of opposers, a Master Hubberdine, a most violent man, taking the lead. Cranmer, however, was now Archbishop of Canterbury, and in various ways he openly showed himself the friend and approver of Latimer. But he was at length extricated from the snares which his enemies had laid for him, by an extraordinary device of his friends, and indeed of the king himself. At the recommendation of Anne Boleyn, and the Lord Cromwell, the persecuted minister was suddenly promoted to the bishopric of Worcester, which had just become vacant. Having been so much beset by persecution, as a private clergyman, he gladly accepted the office, both to secure his own safety, and with the hope of having more opportunities of extending the kingdom of God, and doing good to his fellow-creatures. After having made many reforms in his own diocese, Latimer was summoned in the year 1536 to Parliament. He was appointed by Cranmer to preach the sermon before the Convocation, and did so with the eloquence of that sound speech which cannot be condemned. Cranmer and Latimer met with some violent opposition from their adversaries, but for a time the cause which they had at heart prevailed, many changes took place favourable to the Reformation;—the Bible was translated into English, and recommended to general reading in the following year.

Latimer was again resident at Court, but he was no courtier. He was faithful to the duties of his new calling, and as plain spoken to the highest person in the realm, as to the poorest labourer.

We all know the story of his new-year's offering to the king. When others brought their courtly homage, and rich jewels and such-like gifts, the faithful Bishop of Worcester put a New Testament into the king's hand, with a leaf folded down at the place where it is written, "Whoremongers and adulterers, God will judge." Such honest men are rarely met with—they were rare at that day—they are still rare.

The unblemished uprightness, and uncompromising faithfulness of Hugh Latimer, gave weight to his character. He was worthy of his high calling, for at the court of a great and despotic king, he spoke and acted as one who was faithful to a far higher Monarch. He spoke the plain truth in the ears of the highest man in the realm, not holding men's persons in admiration, and playing the flatterer to no one. When



AN OLD STREET IN WORCESTER.

for instance, the king frowned upon him, and bade him answer for the seditious sermon which Bishop Gardiner, in the king's presence, had charged him with preaching, honest Hugh Latimer bluntly bade his accuser tell him how he was to preach, and then turning to King Henry, he boldly met the charge with these plain but respectful words:

"I never thought myself worthy, nor did I sue, to be a preacher before your Grace, but I was called to it, and am willing, if you mislike me, to give place to my betters; for I grant there are a great many more worthy than I am; and if it be your Grace's pleasure so to allow them for preachers, I would be content to bear their books after

them; but if your Grace allow me for a preacher, I would desire your Grace to give me leave to discharge my conscience, and give me leave to frame my doctrine according to my audience. I had been a very dolt to have preached so at the borders of your realm as I preach before your Grace."

In his new sphere, the character of Hugh Latimer shone forth with fresh lustre. He was still the same honest single-minded follower of Christ. "For the plain simplicity of life," says Burnet, "he was esteemed a truly primitive bishop and Christian." His chief desire was still to hold forth the word of life in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation. In the management of his diocese, as in every circumstance of his chequered life, this was the one important object which he kept steadily before him. His injunctions as Bishop of Worcester, to the Prior and convent of St. Mary's House in Worcester, eminently declare this. The Bible in English, that so all might be able to understand its glorious truths, and the reading and preaching of the plain, vital doctrines of the Bible, form the sum and substance of the reformation which he desired to introduce into that ignorant community. He considered that "the idolatry, the many kinds of superstitions and other enormities" which he found in the monastery, were to be attributed to "the ignorance and negligence of divers religious persons there;"—and to the English Bible, by God's grace upon the reading and preaching of its wholesome and heavenly precepts, he looked for the cure of all those crying evils. The Prior is accordingly enjoined to provide "a whole Bible in English, to be laid fast chained in some open place, either in the church or cloister of the monastery."

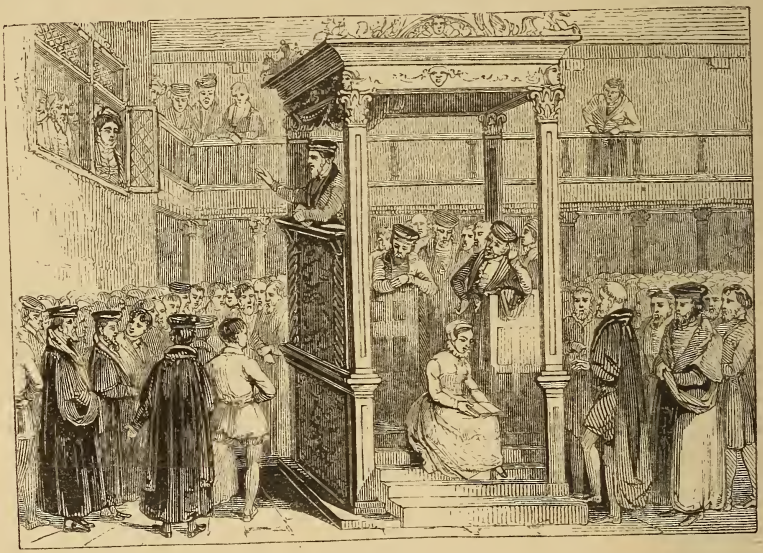
But Latimer did not long hold his bishopric. The famous Act of the Six Articles, set forth by the popish party, was brought before Parliament and passed the House, notwithstanding the strenuous opposition of Cromwell, Cranmer, Latimer, and the other reformers; and on the last day of session, Latimer resigned the bishopric of Worcester. He came home from the House of Parliament, threw off his robes and, leaping up, declared to those who stood about him, that he thought himself lighter than he had ever found himself before. And now he

left the Court and the town, and retired into the country. He was growing old, and he felt that he was no longer fitted for the active duties of public life. He desired not ease or rest, but a more private sphere of labour toward the close of his earthly course. He little knew that the most toilsome and painful period of his public life was yet to come. An injury which he received from the fall of a tree, and which defied all the skill of his country doctors, forced him to return to London. There he could not remain in quiet. The wily Gardiner was, it seems, on the look-out for him. The accusation was brought against him, that he had spoken against the Act of the Six Articles. He was placed in ward in the house of the Bishop of Chichester, where he remained till that prelate was himself committed to the Tower. Latimer was set at liberty, but on coming again to London for medical advice, his enemies succeeded in entangling him in the toils they had laid for him. He was sent to the Tower, where he remained a prisoner till the death of Henry the Eighth.

When Edward the Sixth came to the throne, Latimer was not only set at liberty, but taken into high favour. He often preached before the king at St. Paul's Cross. A quaint old engraving preserves the outward features of these services. His bishopric was again offered to him, but he declined accepting it. He entered however with renewed vigour upon a course of active exertion in the glorious cause of the Reformation, desiring to spend and be spent in the service of his Lord and Master. At the urgent request of his friend Cranmer, he took up his residence with him at Lambeth Palace. There he dwelt, the honoured guest and chosen friend and companion of the mild and pious primate. He had pleaded his age and his infirmities as a reason for refusing to resume the charge of his former diocese, but his powerful mind, as it soon appeared, was as vigorous as ever, and he was still the same energetic and eloquent preacher. He chiefly devoted himself, however, to the cause of the poorer orders of the people, seeking to obtain redress for any who might be oppressed or persecuted. Here it was that he assisted Cranmer in the composition of the Homilies, some of which were entirely written by him.

The following account of him is given by his faithful attendant, Augus-

tine Bernher :—"He being a sore bruised man, and above threescore and seven years of age, every morning ordinarily, winter and summer, about two of the clock in the morning, he was at his book most diligently. The other thing that I would have noticed," he adds, "was his earnestness and diligence in prayer, wherein oftentimes, so long he continued kneeling, that he was not able for to rise without help." And speaking of his prayers when he was soon afterwards in prison, he says, there "were three



LATIMER PREACHING BEFORE THE KING.—(*From Foxe's "Acts and Monuments."*)

principal matters that he especially prayed for; the first, that as God had appointed him to be a preacher and professor of His word, so also He would give him grace to stand unto his doctrine until his death. The other thing, the which most instantly with great violence of God's Spirit he desired was, that God of His mercy would restore the Gospel of His Son Christ unto this realm of England once again: and these words, 'once again, once again,' he did so inculcate and beat into the ears of the Lord God, as though he had seen God before him, and spake unto Him

face to face. The third petition was for the preservation of the Queen's Majesty that now is, namely, the Lady Elizabeth, whom in his prayer he was wont to name, and even with tears desired God to make her a comfort to this comfortless realm of England."

Standing by the old grey towers of Lambeth Palace, I have thought upon the great and godly men who sojourned there in those eventful times. Here, perchance, in this now desolate and silent room, when the slant rays of the rising sun shot through that narrow casement, and quivered on the wall of its deep embrasure, good Father Latimer put out his lamp,—for the pure lovely light from heaven fell on the broad pages and the brazen clasps of his open Bible; and the old man took off his spectacles and rose up to throw open the casement, to look out upon the glistening waters of the broad Thames, and to breathe the morning air, freshened with the rushing tide of the full river. Here he stood, his heart swelling with love to the Giver of all good, thanking and praising Him for the blessings of light and air, so unheeded by many, because so common to all, but precious to those who, like himself, had been the inmates of a close prison. Here he stood, the light breeze playing with his silver hair, and fluttering in the leaves of his book till the rustling sound called him back to his delightful studies.

And now again he rises as the accustomed sound of the chapel bell meets his ear, and the door opens, and his faithful friend and servant, Augustine Bernher, enters, and helps his infirm master to don his gown, and takes down his square cap from the pin on the wall, and puts his staff into his hand. They have left the chamber, and their footfall in the old corridor is more faintly heard as they descend to the chapel below. And now there is a friendly greeting between the good old Latimer and the grave and gentle Cranmer as they meet in the ante-chapel, and enter together that ancient and beautiful building, so pure a specimen of the noble architecture of far distant times. We hear the voice of that godly assembly pouring forth the fervent devotions of their hearts in the simple and solemn liturgy—the prayer and the response, in which all take their part, and offer aloud in that interchange of voices, the sacrifice of prayer and praise. All the household are present: the Mistress Cranmer, the niece of Osiander

(her husband's friend) and the children of the Primate, and certain learned foreigners, his frequent guests, with master Morice, his secretary; and many serving men and women of staid and cheerful demeanour, in all a goodly company, whose devout and earnest looks when the Holy Scriptures are read seem to say, "Now, therefore, we are all here present before God to hear all things that are commanded thee of God." The morning service is over, and the company dispersed; but we find the godly Father Latimer soon after, not in his chamber, but on the broad level walk of this once beautiful garden, when smoke and gas had not blackened the stems of the stately trees, and poisoned the atmosphere. The dew lies on the tender blades of the fresh grass, and the deep green leaves wave in the stirring breeze; the rose-bushes are bursting into flower and fragrance, and the nightingale's rich song fills the air with music.

There the old man walks alone, at no great distance from that ivy-mantled wall, his book in his hand, and listens from time to time, as he passes the little door in the wall—for there a knock is often heard, the knock of some poor or long-persecuted one, to whom he lifts the latch, and gives admittance that he may hear with patient thoughtfulness the tale of trouble, and use his influence—an influence then of powerful interest with the youthful King—to see that the cause is righted, or that relief is given.

On the death of Edward, Cranmer was involved in the troubles which soon gathered thick upon him, owing to the part which he had taken in the question of the succession, when at the request of the dying monarch he gave his consent to the nomination of the Lady Jane Grey to the throne. Latimer left Lambeth at this time, and retired to the country; but Mary had scarcely been proclaimed, when a pursuivant was sent to arrest the old man, then in the neighbourhood of Coventry,* and summon him to London. John Careless, a poor weaver, but a gifted and faithful servant of Christ—who afterwards escaped the stake of martyrdom only by dying in prison under the privations he endured—came to the knowledge of the order that had been given to apprehend Latimer. He hastened to forewarn and prepare him, arriving six hours before the queen's messenger, and thus giving him full time to make his escape.

* Was he with his friend John Old, Vicar of Cubbington?

But Latimer resolved not to flee. When the pursuivant came, he found the aged saint equipped for his journey, and the first words which Latimer addressed to him were, "My friend, you be a welcome messenger to me, and be it known unto you and to the whole world, that I go as willingly to London at this present, being called by my prince to render a reckoning of my doctrine, as ever I went to any place in the world. And I doubt not but that God, as He hath made me worthy to preach His word before two princes, so will He enable me to witness the same unto the third, either to

TRAITOR'S GATE, TOWER OF LONDON.

be a comfort or discomfort eternally." Strange, however, as it might seem, the pursuivant, after he had delivered his letter, departed without his prisoner. It was probably the real desire of the popish party that he should take himself away to some foreign land. They hated him; but they dreaded the injury to their cause from having anything to do with Latimer.

Latimer set off on his journey, a prisoner without a keeper, obeying the summons of his sovereign, unjust and unrighteous as it was. Passing

through Smithfield he said quietly, "Smithfield hath long groaned for me." He appeared before the council, and calmly bore the taunts and the abuse with which he was assailed and was then committed to the Tower. It was winter, and the good old man suffered keenly from the bitterness of the cold, for he was without a fire, or the means of keeping warmth in his aged frame. One morning, hailing the lieutenant's man, he bade him tell his master, "that if he did not look better to him, perchance he should escape." The lieutenant of the Tower, on hearing this, became alarmed, and fearing that he should escape, began to look more strictly to his prisoner, and hastening to him, reproached him with his words; "Yea, master lieutenant, so I said," quoth Latimer, "for you look, I think, that I should burn; but except you let me have some fire, I am like to deceive your expectation; for I am like here to starve for cold."

During the period which Latimer passed in the Tower, ample time was given him by that gracious Lord, who ordereth all things well, fully to look his coming death in the face, and to prepare himself to leave a world in which he had endured much hardness, and where he had assuredly fought a good fight. The venerable Latimer was carried to Oxford. He had two honourable companions to go with him, Cranmer and Ridley. He was merely transferred from one scene of suffering to another. It has been truly, though somewhat lightly, said in the case of Ridley and Latimer, that "Cambridge had the honour of educating those whom Oxford had the honour of burning."

My reader may remember the description of the noble but persecuted saint, whose appearance was at once so piteous as to his outward garb, and yet so dignified as to the man himself. When he was summoned to answer for his faith, "He held his hat in his hand, having a kerchief on his head, with a nightcap or two, and a great cap, such as townsmen use, with flaps to button under his chin, and wore an old threadbare gown of Bristol frieze, girded round him with a penny girdle, at which hung his Testament by a leathern string, and his spectacles hung round his neck." There was a strange mixture of dignity of character, with the natural feebleness of advanced age and bodily debility, a moral grandeur and a physical infirmity, the one at times conquering the other; the spirit of the

saint, ripened and fitted for its glorious destiny, and the earthly tabernacle shattered and decayed, and about to be returned to the dust from whence it was taken; the soul's vision clearer than the eagle's glance, and its supernatural forces in their fullest vigour; but the eye of the natural man dim, and the force of the natural man abated; till at last the spiritual man triumphed and rose superior to all the feebleness of age and infirmity.

OXFORD.—*(After an old Engraving.)*

I must refer my reader to Foxe, for the details of his examinations. "The snatches, revilings, checks, rebukes, and taunts," such, he says, "as I never heard the like in such an audience all my life long;" for "he did not escape hissing and scornful laughter." His complaints of being kept standing in the cold, gazing on stone walls; the pitiful meanness of the men who questioned him, when they had removed the carpet or cloth which lay upon the table whereat Master Ridley stood, who had been examined on the previous day, "because, as men reported, Master Latimer had never the degree of Doctor, as Master Ridley had, which, however, is an unlikely supposition; when, eftsoons as Master Latimer appeared, as

he did the day before, perceiving no cloth upon the table, he laid his hat, which was an old felt, under his elbows, before he spake to the commissioners." Foxe goes on graphically and vividly to describe his praying to be allowed a seat; the awakening of his attention to the specious appeals of his examiners, when he lifted up his head, for before he leaned his head on his hand; his accurate memory of Holy Scripture, when, having exposed a garbled passage of God's word, which he had cited from the published sermon of one of his judges, without knowing that the Bishop of Gloucester, then present, was the author, he added with all the acuteness and energy of his vigorous mind, in his own quaint language, "What clipping of God's coin is here!" He gave a solemn and dignified rebuke to the shouts and laughter of the crowd: "Why, my masters, this is no laughing matter; I answer upon life and death: woe unto you that laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep." He steadily adhered to God's inspired word, and gave a determined refusal to allow any other standard of appeal. His reply to Weston's insolent inquiry was quick and spirited. "Forty years ago," said Weston; "whither could you have gone to have found your doctrine?" "The more cause we have to thank God," cried Latimer, "that hath now sent the light into the world." One complaint was touching, "So you look for learning at my hands, which have gone so long to the school of oblivion, making the bare walls my library, keeping me so long in prison without book or pen and ink; and now you let me loose to come and answer to articles."

One of the most striking parts of the narrative is the glimpse we obtain, in his written protestation given before to Weston—of a prison scene, when, after affirming that he had read the Testament seven times since he had been in prison, he adds: "And yet could I never find in the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ (which the Papists call the sacrament of the altar) neither flesh, blood, nor bones, nor this word 'transubstantiation.' And because peradventure, my masters (that can so soon make Christ's body of bread, which was not made, but conceived by the Holy Ghost in the Virgin's womb, as God's invaluable word doth testify, and also all the ancient fathers,) might say that I doted for age,

and my wits were gone, so that my words were not to be credited; yet, behold! the providence of God, which will have this truth known (yea, if all men held their tongues the stones should speak), did bring this to pass, and where these famous men, viz., Master Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, Master Ridley, Bishop of London, that holy man, Master Bradford, and I, old Hugh Latimer, were imprisoned in the Tower of London, for Christ's gospel preaching, and for because we would not go a-massing; every one in close prison from other; the same Tower being so full of other prisoners, that we four were thrust into one chamber, as men not to be accounted of; but (God be thanked! to our great joy and comfort) there did we together read over the New Testament with great deliberation and painful study: and I assure you, as I will answer at the tribunal throne of God's majesty, we could find in the testament of Christ's body and blood no other presence but a spiritual presence, nor that the mass was any sacrifice for sins: but in that heavenly book it appeared that the sacrifice which Christ Jesus our Redeemer did upon the cross, was holy, perfect, and good; that God, the heavenly Father, did require none other, nor *that* never again to be done; but was pacified with that only omni-sufficient and most painful sacrifice of that most sweet slain Lamb, Christ our Lord, for our sins."

His adversaries would not be satisfied without at least the form of a dispute; they therefore now pressed him with many questions and authorities from the Fathers. Latimer answered their inquiries as far as propriety demanded, but would not notice their long scholastic arguments. He repeated the principles which he believed, in which faith, he said, he desired to die. Upon the whole, he managed even better than Cranmer and Ridley; for they answered the Romish arguments from the Fathers by reasonings from similar authorities; but Latimer told them he depended only upon Scripture. "Then you are not of St. Chrysostom's faith, nor St. Augustine's," said Dr. Smith. Latimer replied, "I have told you, I am of their faith when they say well, and bring Scripture for what they declare; and further than this St. Augustine deserveth not to be believed."

This is ever the way with the Romanists in their disputations; and

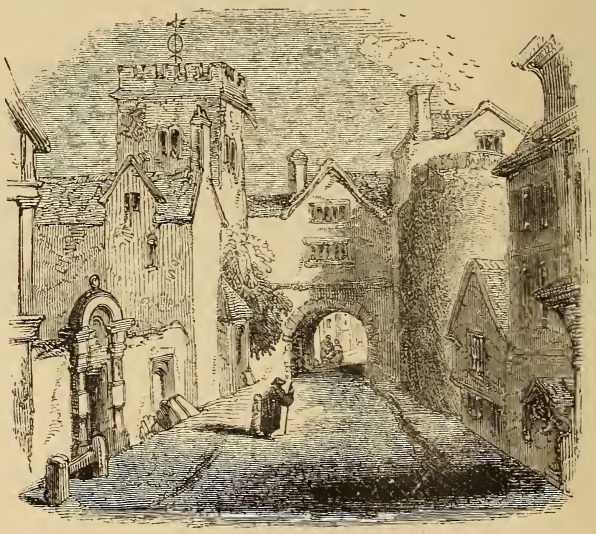
Latimer manifested the holy simplicity of a truly wise man, by the mode in which he met them. They may perplex, confuse, and appear to obtain a victory in all other ways, if we forsake Scripture. But compel them but to meet you on the ground of Scripture—keep them to Scripture, and Scripture alone, and they will find you not only unconquerable but invulnerable; and this is not only the wise way to oppose them, but it is simply the right, and the only right way. A Christian man can hold but one standard of unquestionable authority and unanswerable appeal, and that is the divinely-inspired word of the Lord his God. Whatever is not written there, and cannot be proved therefrom, may be, and must be, reduced to this ground—it is the word of man. However specious the argument, however high the authority—only the word of man. However ancient, however strongly supported by the concurrent testimony and advocacy of great names and wise and learned doctors, still it is only of man and from man; and all men, and all councils and assemblies of men, have erred. Thousands and millions of candles and lamps might be lighted up, and give a light which looks as bright and as powerful as sun-light; but all that man has lighted, may be put out by man. The sun can no man extinguish.

The hour was at length come to which this true witness unto Christ had long looked forward: and with regard to which he had tenderly exhorted his fellow-prisoner, Ridley, to pray against the fear of death. He had done so, and "as a prince he had had power with God and had prevailed." Earnest endeavours were used to wring a recantation from the two prelates; Peter de Soto, a learned Dominican, long the confessor of the emperor Charles the Fifth, who had been sent for from the continent to Oxford to confirm the cause of the Papists, sought admittance to the two prisoners; Ridley admitted him to a conference, but Latimer declined seeing him. On their way to the place of execution, the two met; Ridley heard a noise behind him, and on turning his head, saw Latimer following as fast as his infirmities would permit. "O be ye there," was the exclamation of the Bishop of London, his heart doubtless cheered by the knowledge that so firm and constant a spirit would bear him company at his most trying season. "Yea, I am after you, as fast as I can follow,'

was Latimer's reply. And when he overtook him, Ridley embraced and kissed him, and said with a cheerful countenance: "Be of good heart, brother, for God will either assuage the fury of the flame, or else strengthen us to abide it." Side by side they walked till they came to the stake. They both kissed it; and after kneeling for a short time in earnest prayer, they conversed together. "No one could ever tell," says Foxe, "what they said one to the other at that time." They were now detained to listen to a sermon preached by a wretched time-server, whose text on such an occasion plainly manifested the spirit of the man. "Though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." For a quarter of an hour they had to endure the hearing of the misapplication of this Scripture, and the insulting mockery of the miserable man that addressed them. The expressive glances, and the uplifted hands of the two victims plainly attested their opinion of the sermon. When it was ended, Ridley said to Latimer, thinking perchance of the effect of such a perversion of Scripture upon the ignorant multitude,—"Will you begin to answer him, or shall I?"—"Begin you, I pray," replied Latimer. Then they both knelt toward the Lord William of Thame, the vice-chancellor, and the others present; and Ridley entreated permission to speak. He was told that his request would be granted, if he would recant, but that otherwise he must be silent.

When the order had been given that the prisoners should prepare for death, Ridley gave away various articles of his dress. Latimer gave nothing; but he very quietly suffered them to strip off the miserable garments which he had on, and he stood upright in the long new shroud or shirt commonly worn by the martyrs at the stake: and to the astonishment of all who beheld him, "whereas in his clothes, he appeared a withered and crooked old man, he now stood bolt upright, as comely a father as one might behold." Then the smith took a chain of iron, and brought the same about Latimer's middle, and fastened him to the stake. When a faggot kindled with fire was laid down at Ridley's feet, then it was that Latimer spoke those words which have since rung through the length and breadth of the land, and have become as it were, the watchword of all, to whom the pure faith of Christ and His apostles is

precious, in the halls of the nobles, and at the cottage hearths of the labourers of the land—which have found their place equally in the page of the scholar, and in the child's story book. True words of prophecy were they! fulfilled, and we trust fulfilling with every passing year, even to their perfect accomplishment. "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man; we shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust, shall never be put out!" Truly it seemed as if all the energies of his strong spirit, and of his whole eventful life, had been concentrated in those few forcible words at his departing hour.



PLACE OF LATIMER'S AND RIDLEY'S MARTYRDOM.

As the fire was rising around them, Ridley cried out with a loud voice, offering his prayer in Latin, as he commended his soul to God. Latimer cried out as vehemently, but in his own English tone: "O Father in heaven, receive my soul." He received the flame as if embracing it, and after he had stroked his face with his hands, and as it were, bathed them a little in the fire, he soon died, "as it appeareth," says Foxe, "with very little pain, or none;" and the faithful martyrologist adds: "And thus

much, concerning the end of this old and blessed servant of God, Master Latimer: for whose laborious travails, fruitful life, and constant death, the whole realm hath cause to give great thanks to Almighty God."

"Did there ever any man flourish," asks Sir R. Morryson, a learned man, who lived in those days, "I say, not in England only, but in any nation of the world, since the apostles, who preached the gospel more sincerely, purely, and honestly, than Hugh Latimer, Bishop of Worcester?"

"This blunt preaching," says Fuller, "was admirably effective in those days." He mentions a minister who without Latimer's spirit had been endeavouring to preach in Latimer's style, but whose foolish sermons set the congregation laughing. He adds, in a style as quaint as Latimer's—"He will make but bad music, who hath the instrument and the fiddlestick, but none of the rosin of Master Latimer."

"Old Hugh Latimer," says Fuller, "was Ridley's partner at the stake, and crawled thither after him; he was one who had got more learning than many ever had, who flout at his plain sermons: though his downright style was as necessary in that ignorant age, as it would be ridiculous in ours. Indeed he condescended to people's capacity; and many men unjustly count those low in learning, who indeed do but stoop to their auditors. Let me see any of our sharp wits do that with the edge, which his bluntness did with the back of the knife, and persuade so many to restitution of ill-gotten goods. Though he came after Ridley to the stake, he got before him to heaven: his body, made tinder by age, was no sooner touched by the fire, but instantly this old Simeon had his *Nunc Dimittis*, and brought the news to heaven that his brother was following after."

When the fire was burnt low and the spectators crowded round the dying embers, they beheld the heart of Latimer unconsumed and a stream of blood gushed from it. He had indeed shed his heart's blood as a testimony to the truth of the doctrines which he preached.

The following extracts from Latimer's sermons may serve to illustrate his doctrine and teaching:

"Certain it is, that customary sinners have but small temptations, for the devil letteth them alone, because they be fully his already—he hath

them in bondage—they be his slaves. But when there is any good man abroad that intendeth to leave sin and wickedness, and abhorreth the same, that man shall be tempted, the devil goeth about to use all means to destroy that man, and to stop his forwardness. . . . but the devil hath no farther power than God will allow him; the devil can go no farther than God permitteth him to do; which thing shall strengthen our faith, insomuch that we shall be sure to overcome him."

Speaking of the Law and the Gospel in a sermon preached on Twelfth Day, he says, "What doth the law require of us? Truly righteousness and holiness. This we have—we are righteous, but how? not by our works, for our works are not able to make us just and deliver us from our sins, but we are just by this, that our sins are pardoned unto us, through the faith we have in Christ our Saviour; for He through his fulfilling of the law took away the curse of the law from our heads. He took away the power of sin. Sin is made no sin."

Again: "There is a common saying among us here in England—every thing as it is taken—which indeed is not so: for every thing is, as it is, howsoever it be taken: but in some manner of things it is true as in this matter. We of ourselves are unjust, our works are imperfect, and so are disagreeable to God's laws; yet for Christ's sake we are taken for just, and our works are allowable before God, not that they are so in themselves, but they are taken well for His sake. God hath a pleasure in our works, though they are not so perfectly done as they ought to be; yet they please Him, and He delighteth in them, and He will reward them with everlasting life. We have them not by our merits, but by Christ. The kingdom of heaven is the gift of God: so likewise St. Paul saith, 'Ye are saved freely without works.' Ephes. ii. 8. Therefore when ye ask, are ye saved? say, Yes. How? why gratis—freely, and here is all our comfort to stay our consciences. You will say now—Here all is faith, faith, but we hear nothing of good works, but I tell you, we are bound to walk in good works; for to that end we are come to Christ—to leave sin, to live uprightly, and so to be saved by Him; but you must be sure to what end you must work; you must know how to esteem your good works. If I fast and give alms, and think to be saved by it, I thrust

Christ out of His seat: what am I better when I do so? . . . These are good works,—when every one doth his calling, as God hath appointed him to do; but they must be done to show ourselves thankful, and therefore they are called in Scripture, sacrifices of thanksgiving, not to win heaven withal. For if we should do so, we should deny Christ our Saviour, despise and tread Him under our feet. For to what purpose suffered He, if I shall with my good works merit heaven? As the papists who deny Him indeed, for they think to get to heaven with their pilgrimages, and with running hither and thither. I pray you note this, we must first be made good, before we can do good; we must first be made just, before our works please God: for when we are justified by faith in Christ and are made good by Him, then cometh our duty, that is, to do good works, to make a declaration of our thankfulness." Such was the faith of honest Hugh Latimer, whom some in our own church have railed at in the present day for his ultra-Protestantism. We recommend to such persons the study of his divinity, or rather of that well-spring of life, the Word of God, from whence his divinity flowed like a pure sweet stream.

There is a monument to Hugh Latimer in the church of Thurcaston: it was placed there about five years ago, by the present rector. The monument is of stone, with its inscription on a tablet of marble; and the head of the venerable martyr, also in marble, surmounts it.

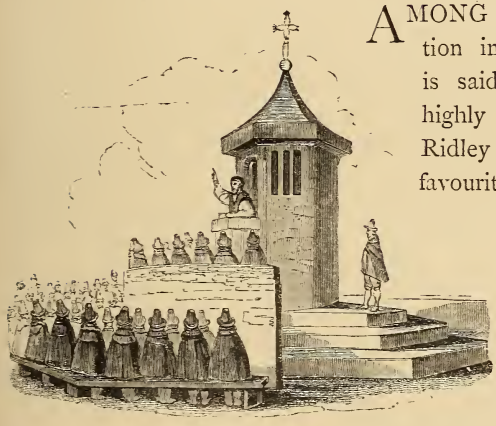
Let us look at the lovely view of Bradgate Park from the garden of the Rectory. It is but little more than a mile from hence, and we may then as well wander on, to the old wall which still surrounds the romantic domain, enclosing a circuit of five or six miles, and enter the park and visit the ruins now spread over the ground where once the lofty halls and tapestried chambers of the mansion of Bradgate stood in their stateliness.

And now let us rest in some woodland glade of this beautiful park where the soft greensward is fragrant with violets, and converse together of those whose memory haunts and hallows the scenes around us, who learned to love these quiet and secluded places in their happy childhood, and doubtless often looked back to them with fond recollections when called away into a world of strife and vain glory, a world in which they sojourned

during their appointed time, alike unspoilt by its smiles, and undismayed by its frowns. They were kept by the power of God, through faith, in a holy simplicity of heart and life, till they were both called to witness a good confession, to suffer a dreadful death, and to leave a world which was not worthy of them.

The young, lovely, and ingenuous lady of Bradgate, the Lady Jane Grey, and the aged, single-minded martyr of Thurcaston, Bishop Latimer, were two of the brightest ornaments of the age in which they lived; and the palace-mansion of the one, and the humble birth-place of the other, were within the short distance of a mile.

NORTHUMBERLAND, LONDON, OXFORD.



AMONG the martyrs of the Reformation in England, Bishop Hooper is said to have been the most highly esteemed by John Foxe. Ridley seems to have been the favourite with Fuller, if we may judge from the place he has given him in his Holy State. In his paper entitled, *The Good Bishop*, after glancing in some of his remarks, on the qualities in a good bishop which were peculiarly manifested in Ridley, he concludes by saying; "We now come to give a double example of a godly bishop; the first one out of the primitive times:" and he cites Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. He then adds; "The second out of the English Church at the Reformation —both excellent in their several ways." Ridley is the English bishop, whom he brings forward as his example.

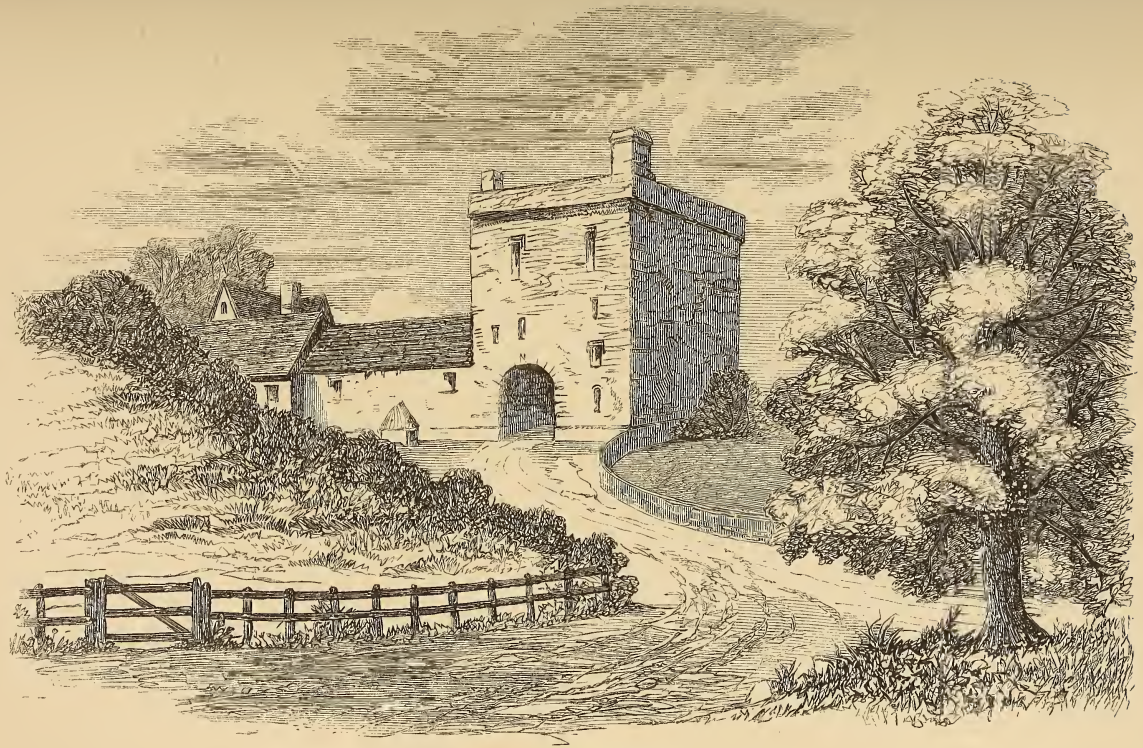
The name of Ridley is one of note in the north of England. Camden, in his "Britannia," says, "We had a view of Willimoteswick, the seat of the worshipful family of the Ridleys; and close by, of the river Alon, emptying itself into the Tyne, with a pompous rattle, both the Alons being now met in one channel."

Bishop Ridley, in one of his conferences with Latimer, during their imprisonment together in the year 1556, thus refers to the home of his childhood: "In Tyndale, where I was born, not far from the Scottish borders, I have known my countrymen watch night and day in their harness, such as they had: that is in their jacks, and their spears in their hands (you call them northern gads), especially when they had any privy warning of the coming of the Scots. And so doing, although at every such bickering, some of them spent their lives, yet by such means, like pretty men, they defended their country; and those that so died, I think that, before God, they died in a good quarrel, and their offspring and progeny, all the country loved them the better for their fathers' sakes."

The family seat of the Ridleys stood near to the old Roman or Picts' wall, which divided England from Scotland. It was no quiet mansion of a peaceful race in olden times, but the dwelling of a brave and hardy household, who had their full share in the disturbances so often arising on the border territory. And frequent mention is made of their courage and importance in the records of border history.

The Ridleys are supposed to have come originally from Cheshire, before they settled in Northumberland; and the head of the family was of knightly rank. Let us visit Ridley's birthplace, as it now stands before us. In the midst of this wild district of heath-clad hills, extending far on every side, where the silver Tyne flows through the level of a fertile valley, the ancient tower of Willimoteswick crowns the rising ground, above the river. A few clustering trees still grow beside the tower and the stone house adjoining it.

Here stands the old seat of Willimoteswick, above the meeting of the Tyne and the Blackleugh, for so this little stream is now called, though Camden names it the Alon; and here the two streams, having become one, take their course together through the valley. This was the home of Ridley's early years. Here the youthful student has, no doubt, often stood, forgetful of the book in his hand, and of his delightful studies, as his eye wandered on over the varied scenery of the pleasant valley—while the fresh and bracing air was blowing around him, and the wild bees hummed in the heather, and the larks sang loudly in the cloudless sky.



BIRTHPLACE OF RIDLEY.

As far back as the year 1270, we find a Nicholas de Rydeley connected with the lands at Wilmotswyke. The name does not appear again in the existing records till the year 1424, when Odard de Ridley is mentioned as entailing possessions in Houtwesel, Heasshalgh, Thorngrafton, etc. In 1542, Willymontswyke consisted of "a good tower and house adjoining there, of the inheritance of Nicholas Ridley, and was kept in good reparation;" and five generations of the ancestors of this Nicholas had resided on this spot. In 1652, Musgrave Ridley of Willimoteswick, a brave royalist, engaging in the war between Charles the First and his Parliament, his estate was confiscated by the Commonwealth.

The father of Nicholas Ridley was the third son of the head of the ancient family. The second son was father to Dr. Lancelot Ridley, preacher in the church of Canterbury; and Dr. Robert Ridley, the fourth son, was a celebrated divine and canonist in the reign of Henry the Eighth. Thus, from this bold and warlike race came forth these three clergymen, one of them being called of God to take a foremost place in a very different warfare from that of his forefathers—a warfare in which he proved himself a good soldier, enduring hardness, but ever having his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; and illustrating in his person, though in a different manner, the character of a knight true to the chivalry of his order—"a very valiant, gentle knight." He was born at the beginning of the century, 1500, and passed his schoolboy days at Newcastle-upon-Tyne; from whence he went up, when verging upon manhood, at the expense of his uncle, Dr. Robert Ridley, to Pembroke Hall, Cambridge. His excellent character for learning and for piety was soon so remarkable, that an exhibition was offered to him in University College. Oxford. This offer he did not accept, and he was shortly after elected to a fellowship in his own college. His uncle then sent him to pursue his studies at Paris and Louvaine. On his return to Cambridge, he was made proctor there; and, in that office, he was called upon to sign the judgment of the university, which denies to the Bishop of Rome any jurisdiction over the realm of England. His mind was slowly awakened to the errors of that apostate Church, and as slowly opened to the reception of the true and scriptural faith. He was one of those learners, whose minds retaining and

digesting thoroughly the food they take; "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." His knowledge of Scripture induced Cranmer to invite him to take up his residence with him at Lambeth, as his chaplain. In the following year, he was appointed by the Archbishop to the vicarage of Herne in Kent. His election to the Mastership of Pembroke Hall, two years afterward, recalled him to Cambridge.

BISHOP RIDLEY.

Probably the happiest part of Ridley's sojourn on earth, was during the time that he was Master of Pembroke. He must there have known more of quietness than it was his lot to meet with afterwards in those unquiet times; and it was probably there that he was most occupied with the great work of learning, under the only teacher, the Holy Spirit, to know himself by close self-searching, and to acquaint himself with the Lord God, as He has manifested himself in his own word. However pleasantly he might have occupied himself with the study of those books, which he loved so well, holding communing with minds gifted and cultivated like his own: however keenly he might have enjoyed his daily intercourse, and converse

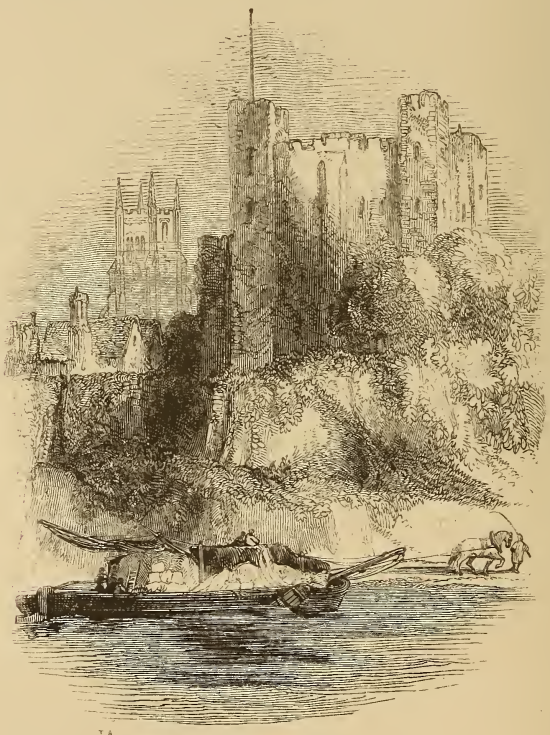
with the most learned and admirable men, then resident in the university: however dearly he may have prized the true and firm affection of his own personal friends (friends more faithful and hearty, he declares in his farewell to them, he never found elsewhere), he there enjoyed far higher and sweeter converse; for he learned to delight himself in God, and to be occupied with His statutes. His own words acquaint us best with his love for Cambridge, and his college life. "Farewell, therefore, Cambridge, my loving mother and tender nurse: if I should not acknowledge these manifold benefits—yea, if I should not for thy benefits at least love thee again truly, I were to be counted too ungrateful and unkind! What benefits hadst thou ever, that thou usest to give and bestow upon thy best beloved children, that thou thoughtest too good for me! First, to be scholar, then, fellow, and after my departure from thee, thou calledst me again to a mastership of a right worshipful college. I thank thee, my loving mother, for all this thy kindness, and I pray God that His laws and the sincere Gospel of Christ may ever be truly taught and faithfully learned in thee!

"Farewell, Pembroke Hall, of late mine own college, my care and my charge; what case thou art in now, I know not. Thou wast ever named since I knew thee (which is now a thirty years ago) to be studious, well-learned, and a great setter forth of Christ's gospel and of God's true word; so I found thee, and, blessed be God, so I left thee indeed. Woe is me for thee, mine own dear college, if ever thou suffer thyself by any means to be brought from that trade. In thy orchard (the walls, butts, and trees, if they could speak, would bear me witness) I learned, without book, almost all Paul's epistles. Of which study, although in time a great part did depart from me, yet the sweet smell thereof, I trust, I shall carry with me into heaven, for the profit thereof I think I have felt in all my lifetime ever after: and I ween of late (whether they abide there now I cannot tell) there was that did the like. The Lord grant that this zeal and love toward that part of God's word, which is a key and true commentary to all Holy Scripture, may ever abide in that college, so long as the world shall endure."

And thus it seems that the sweetest learning to this learned man, even

in the seat of learning, was the knowledge which he acquired of the Holy Scriptures: so that the word of God "dwelt in him richly in all wisdom and spiritual understanding," and those things which are often hidden from the wise and prudent, were clearly revealed to him.

The same year, 1540, in which he was made Master of Pembroke, he was appointed chaplain to Henry the Eighth. His sermon on Ash-



ROCHESTER.

Wednesday, in the Chapel Royal, in which he declared himself the decided and open opponent of Popery, drew from Gardiner a long and controversial letter. By Henry the Eighth he was promoted to the bishopric of Rochester. On the accession of Edward, he was consecrated Bishop of London,—

being chosen to fill that important see when Bonner had openly shown himself too scandalous a character to be allowed to retain it.

Foxe beseeches his reader, with care and study, to peruse diligently, to consider, and deeply to print in his breast the tragical story and life of Dr. Ridley, "seeing him to be a man beautified with such excellent qualities, so ghostly inspired, and godly learned, and now written doubtless in the book of life, with the blessed saints of the Almighty, crowned and throned amongst the glorious army of martyrs."

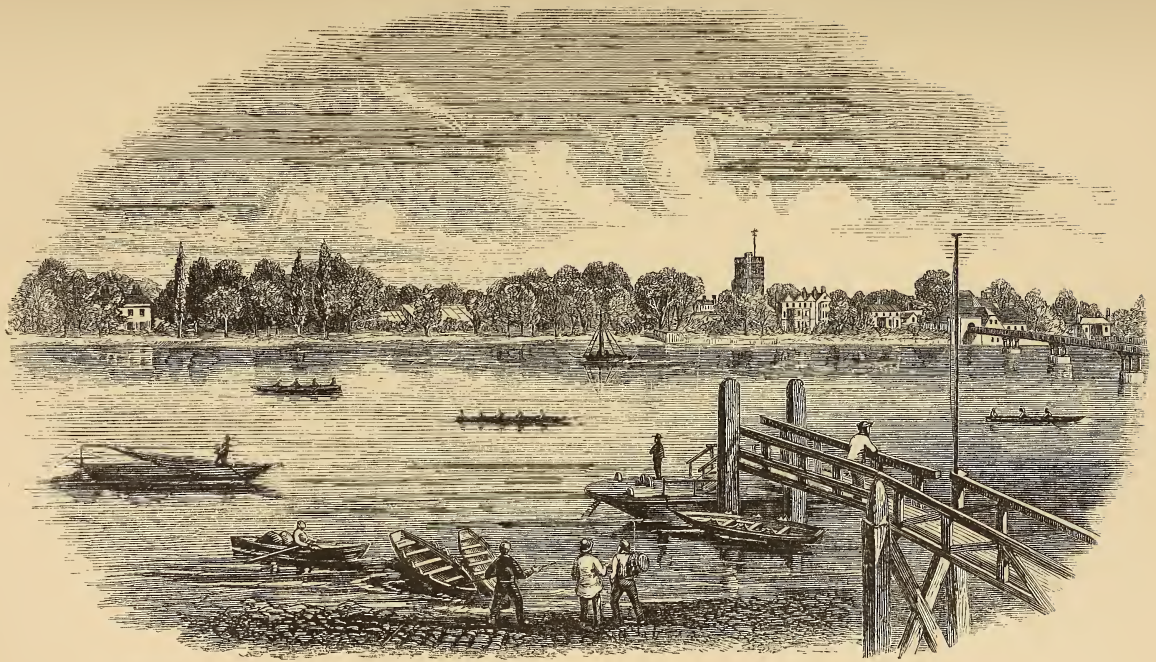
"For his calling and offices as Bishop of London," says Foxe, "he so diligently occupied himself by preaching and teaching the true and wholesome doctrine of Christ, that no good child was more singularly loved by his dear parents, than he by his flock and diocese. Every holiday and Sunday he preached in some one place or other, except he were otherwise hindered by weighty affairs and business, to whose sermons the people resorted, swarming about him like bees, and coveting the sweet flowers and wholesome juice of the fruitful doctrine, which he did not only preach, but showed the same by his life as a glittering lanthorn to the eyes and senses of the blind, in such pure order and chastity of life (declining from evil desires and concupiscences), that even his very enemies could not reprove him in any one iota thereof.

"He was a man, right comely and proportioned in all points, both in complexion and lineaments of the body. He took all things in good part, bearing no malice nor rancour from his heart, but straightway forgetting all injuries or offences done against him. He was very kind and natural to his kinsfolk, yet not bearing with them any thing otherwise than right would require, giving them always for a general rule, yea to his own brother and sister, that they doing evil should seek or look for nothing at his hand, but should be as strangers and aliens unto him; and they to be his brother or sister, who used honesty and a godly trade of life."

His admiring biographer then tells us how he passed the day; his secret prayers and contemplations, his use of the common prayer daily with his family, his studies, his habits of business, his simple recreation after his temperate meal was over. He describes the occupation of every

hour of the well-spent day from his rising in the morning till he lay down to rest at night. "Being at his manor of Fulham, as divers times he used to be, he read daily a lecture to his family at the common prayer, beginning at the Acts of the Apostles, and so going throughout all the Epistles of St. Paul, giving to every man that could read a New Testament . . . . being marvellous careful over his family, that they might be a spectacle of all virtue and honesty to others. Thus as he was godly and virtuous himself, so nothing but virtue and godliness reigned in his house, feeding them with food of our Saviour Jesus Christ."

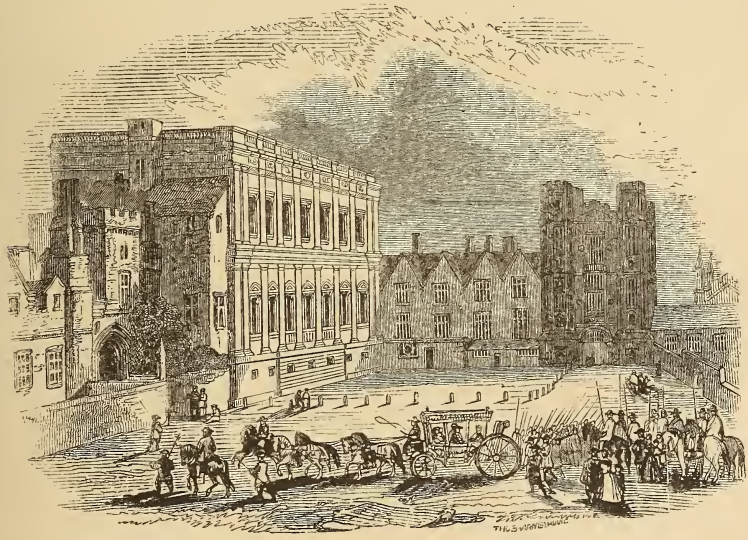
Foxe notices especially his "gentle nature and kindly pity" towards the aged mother and the sister of Bonner, whom he sent for to dine with him every day, always placing "his mother Bonner" at the head of the table beside himself, and never suffering her to be displaced from her seat, though the highest nobles were present. A graphic account of an interview between Ridley, when Bishop of London, with the Princess Mary is also recorded. The bishop was at his house at Hadham, in Hertfordshire within two miles of Hunsden, where Mary was residing, and he waited on the princess to pay his duty to her, and to ask permission to preach before her in the parish church on the following Sunday. The princess had received him courteously, till he spoke of preaching, and then her manner suddenly changed, and she bluntly told him that he might preach if he pleased, "but," she added, "neither I nor any of mine shall hear you." "Madam," said Ridley, "I trust you will not refuse God's word." "As for your new books," she afterwards said, persisting in regarding the inspired and written word, as '*new books*,' "I thank God, I never read any of them, I never did, nor ever will do;" and she concluded by saying, "My lord, for your gentleness to come and see me I thank you, but for your offering to preach before me I thank you never a whit." "The bishop on returning with Sir Thomas Wharton to the place where they had dined, was invited by him to drink. But after he drunk he paused awhile, and looking very sadly, suddenly brake out into these words: 'Surely I have done amiss.' 'Why so,' asked Sir Thomas Wharton.



FULHAM FROM THE RIVER.

'I have drunk,' said he, 'in the place where God's word offered hath been refused; whereas, if I had remembered my duty, I ought to have departed immediately, and to have shaken off the dust of my shoes, for a testimony against this house.' These words were spoken with such a vehemency, that some of the hearers afterwards confessed their hair to stand upright on their heads. This done, the said bishop departed, and so returned to his house. Testified by a certain reverend personage," adds Foxe, "yet alive, being then the bishop's chaplain."

A very different and beautiful account is given of an interview between Edward the Sixth, the brother of Mary, and Bishop Ridley, towards the close of the youthful monarch's short reign.



WHITEHALL.—*(From an old Engraving.)*

On the assembling of Parliament, Ridley had preached before him in the palace of Whitehall, when, owing to the failing state of the king's health, it was deemed imprudent for him to attend at Westminster Abbey where the sermon was usually preached. The bishop was sent

for by the young king, who received him in the great gallery of the palace. He entered the royal presence uncovered, but the gentle and humble-minded prince addressed him, saying; "Be covered, my lord, and take a seat by me."

Edward had felt deeply the exhortations of the preacher, and after thanking him for his sermon, he added: "I took upon myself to be especially touched by your speech, as well in regard of the abilities God has given me, as in regard of the example which from me He will require; for as in the kingdom I am next under God, so must I most nearly approach Him in goodness and mercy; for as our miseries stand most in need of aid from Him, so are we the greatest debtors, debtors to all that are miserable, and shall be the greatest accountants of our dispensation therein; and therefore, my lord, as you have given me, I thank you, this general exhortation, so direct me, I pray you, by what particular actions, I may this way best discharge my duty." The good bishop was quite overcome. He could scarcely have supposed it possible that he should have found such meekness of wisdom, so deep a conviction of unworthiness, and so high a sense of his responsibility before God, in one of Edward's exalted rank and tender years. Alas, it was also too evident that he who spoke in such godly earnestness, and with such angelic sweetness was soon to depart from the place where his presence, and his influence, and his example were, in the eyes of God's servants, of unspeakable importance. The brilliant light of those sunken eyes, the hectic glow on that transparent cheek, the faltering tones of that impressive voice, all told but too plainly that the immortal spirit was soon to depart from its slight and fragile tenement of clay. Ridley was deeply moved, and wept. For some little time he could not speak; but, on recovering from his emotion, he said, he would give no hasty reply, but besought the king's permission to deliberate, and consult with the chief authorities of the city of London. The king was pleased with Ridley's suggestion, and gave him a letter, in which the information they needed was applied for. The three royal institutions of the Blue-Coat School, St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and the Bridewell, were the fruit of that sermon and that conversation.

The time, however, soon came, when he who had been sent for to confer in private with a king in his palace, was to be deposed from his high office, cast into a prison, and bidden to prepare for a cruel and unmerciful death. The royal Edward was dead, and the most noble and godly members of the Church of England were in prison or in exile. If it was the duty of some to fly to foreign lands, others felt that a far stronger sense of duty constrained them to remain, and meet the fury of the storm of persecution which was about to burst upon them. Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, Hooper, Philpot, were among this band of dauntless men.

"Why should we Christians fear death?" wrote Ridley to his companions in Christ, whether in bondage or in banishment in Christ's gospel cause. "Can death deprive us of Christ, which is all our comfort, our joy, and our life? Nay, forsooth. But contrary: death shall deliver us from this mortal body, which loadeth and beareth down the spirit, that it cannot so well perceive heavenly things; in the which, so long as we dwell, we are absent from God."

We scarcely know any thing finer than the conferences between Ridley and Latimer, during the time of their imprisonment. The argument is nobly sustained, being taken up, as it were, by the one and the other of these admirable men alternately, by way of exercise and preparation for the conflict upon which they were about to enter.

Heartily do we concur with the writer of the solemn preface to these conferences between Latimer and Ridley, when he says of the former,— "Master Latimer came earlier in the morning, and was the more ancient workman in the Lord's vineyard; who also may very well be called (as divers learned men have termed him) the Apostle of England, as one much more worthy of that name, for his true doctrine, and for his sharp reproving of sin and superstitition, than was Augustine, bishop of Canterbury, for bringing in the Pope's monkery and false religion."

Of Ridley, the writer of this preface adds: "Mr. Ridley came later, about the eleventh hour; but no doubt he came when he was effectually called; and from the time of his calling, became a faithful labourer, terrible to the enemies for his excellent learning, and therefore a meet man to

rid out of the Lord's vineyard the sophistical thorns of the wrangling adversaries."

Neither threatened death, nor love of present life, could shake the foundation of the faith of these men, firmly grounded upon the sure rock —Christ. They redeemed liberty of conscience with the bondage of the body; and it was not for the Church of England, but for the Church of God on the whole earth, and for His sake who is the Head of the body, the church, that they fought, and suffered, and died, and conquered. It was not for any church, but for God's truth, God's word, both His incarnate and His written word, that they lived as witnesses, and died as martyrs.

The concluding words of the preface are well suited to the present time: "God grant that the admonition of these, and other godly martyrs, may so warn us, their doctrine so instruct us, and their example so confirm us in the true knowledge and fear of God, that, flying and abhorring idolatry and superstition, we may embrace true religion and piety; forsaking the phantasies of men, we may humbly obey the written word of God, and be ruled thereby; direct all our doings to the glory of His name, and our own endless salvation in Christ Jesus. Amen."

In their first conference several pages are filled with an admirable refutation of the popish heresy of the mass, in which Ridley and Latimer engage in alternate exercises, the one taking up the thread of the discourse, as the other drops it for a while and pauses. Then follows this passage—

"*Against the sacrifice of the mass yet more by Hugh Latimer.*"

"I have read over of late the New Testament three or four times deliberately; yet can I not find there written the popish consecration, nor yet there, transubstantiation, nor there, oblation, nor there, adoration, which be the very sinews and marrow-bones of the mass." He adds: "All popish things (for the most part) are man's inventions; whereas they ought to have the Holy Scripture for their only mode of faith." Again: "How are the Scriptures, say they, to be understanded? St. Augustine answereth, giving this rule. 'One Scripture doth expound another, to a man that is studious, well-willing, and often calling upon God in continual prayer, who giveth His Holy Spirit to them that desire it of Him.' So that the Scripture is not of any private interpretation at any

time. For such a one, though he be a layman fearing God, is much more fit to understand Holy Scripture than any arrogant and proud priest, yea, than the bishop himself, be he never so great and glistening in all his pontificals. . . . One man, having the Scripture and good reason for him, is more to be esteemed himself alone, than a thousand such as they, the papists, either gathered together or succeeding one another. The Fathers have both herbs and weeds; and papists commonly gather the weeds, and leave the herbs; and they speak many times more vehemently in sound of words, than they did mean indeed, or than they would have done, if they had seen what sophistical wranglers should have succeeded them. It is dangerous to trust them in citing the Fathers.

"In all ages the devil hath stirred up some light heads to esteem the sacraments but lightly, as to be empty and bare signs, whom the Fathers have resisted so fiercely, that in their fervour they seem in sound of words to run too far the other way and to give too much to the sacraments, when they did think more measurably. And therefore they are to be read warily with sound judgment. But our papists, they will outface, brace and brag all men: it must needs be as they will have it. Therefore there is no remedy (namely, now when they have the master-bowl in their hand, and rule the roast) but patience. Better it is to suffer what cruelty they will put upon us, than to incur God's high indignation."

Then follows a noble exhortation to his fellow-prisoner, to be of good cheer in the Lord, quite in accordance with the brave unswerving spirit of the noble old father, who seems to have made a more accurate calculation of what they might have to meet with from their adversaries, than any of his fellow-sufferers. "To use many words with them, it shall be but in vain, now that they have a bloody and deadly law prepared for them."

"Fear of death," he goes on to say, "doth most persuade a great number. Be well aware of that argument, for that persuaded Shaxton, as many men thought, after that he had once made a good profession openly before the judgment-seat. The flesh is weak, but the willingness of the Spirit shall refresh the weakness of the flesh. The number of the criers under the altar must needs be fulfilled. If we be segregated thereunto,

happy be we. That is the greatest promotion which God giveth in this world to be such Philippians, to whom it is given, not only to believe, but also to suffer."

This first conference is concluded by Latimer with these words: "Pardon me, and pray for me; pray for me, I say; pray for me, I say,—for I am sometimes so fearful that I could creep into a mouse-hole, sometimes God doth visit me again with his comfort. So He cometh and goeth, to teach me to feel and to know mine infirmity." Again he adds: "But I dwell here now in a school of obliviousness. Fare you well, once again, and be you steadfast and immoveable in the Lord. Paul loved Timothy marvellously well, notwithstanding he saith unto him, 'Be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel:' and again, 'Harden thyself to suffer afflictions.' 'Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life,' saith the Lord."

"Ye have done me an unspeakable pleasure," says Ridley to the venerable Latimer, in their second conference, "and I pray that the Lord may requite it you in that day. For I have received great comfort in your words, yet am I not so filled withal, but that I thirst much more now than before, to drink more of that cup of yours, wherein ye mingle unto me profitable with pleasant. I pray you, good father, let me have one draught more to comfort my stomach; for, surely, except the Lord assist me with His gracious aid, in the time of His service, I know I shall play but the part of a white-livered knight: but truly my trust is in Him, that in mine infirmity He shall try himself strong, and that can make the coward in his cause to fight like a man. . . . . I pray you, good father, for that you are an old soldier and an expert warrior, and, God knoweth, I am but a young soldier, and as yet of small experience in these feats, help me, I pray you, to buckle my harness."

Latimer answers: "'Except the Lord help *me*,' ye mean, sir. You make answer yourself so well, that I cannot better it. Sir, I begin now to smell what you mean; you use me as Bilney did once, when he converted me. Pretending as though he would be taught of me, he sought ways and means to teach me; and so do you. I thank you therefore most heartily. For indeed you minister armour unto me, whereas I was unarmed

before and unprovided, saving that I give myself to prayer for my refuge."

The holy wisdom of the simple-minded Latimer shines forth again brightly in the exhortation that follows.

"Better a few things well pondered than to trouble the memory with too much. You shall prevail more with praying, than with studying, though mixture be best. I intend not to contend much with them in words, after a reasonable account of my faith be given, for it shall be but in vain. They will say as their fathers said, when they have no more to say, 'We have a law, and by our law he ought to die.'"

In the midst of the conference Ridley offers up this touching prayer. "O heavenly Father, the Father of all wisdom, understanding, and true strength, I beseech Thee, for Thy only Son our Saviour Christ's sake, look mercifully upon me, wretched creature, and send Thine Holy Spirit into my breast,—that not only I may understand according to Thy wisdom, how that pestilent and deadly dart is to be borne off, and with what answer it is to be beaten back; but also, when I must join the fight in the field, for the glory of Thy name, that then I, being strengthened with the defence of Thy right hand, may manfully stand in the confession of Thy faith and of Thy truth, and continue in the same unto the end of my life, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen."

After alluding to the habits of his countrymen on the Scottish borders —in a passage already cited—to watch night and day in their harness with their spears in their hands, he adds, "And in the quarrel of Christ our Saviour, in the defence of His own divine ordinances by the which He giveth unto us life and immortality, yea in the quarrel of faith and Christian religion shall we not watch? Shall we not go always armed, ever looking when our adversary (which like a roaring lion seeketh whom he may devour) shall come upon us by reason of our slothfulness? Good Father, forasmuch as I have determined with myself to pour forth these my cogitations into your bosom, here, methinketh, I see you suddenly lifting up your head towards heaven, after your manner, and then looking upon me with your prophetical countenance, and speaking unto me, with these or like words;—'Trust not, my son (I beseech you vouchsafe me the honour

of this name, for in so doing, I shall think myself both honoured and loved of you) trust not, I say, my son, to these word-weapons; for the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power; and remember always the words of the Lord, 'Do not imagine beforehand, what or how you will speak, for it shall be given you even in that same hour, what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.'

"I pray you therefore, Father, pray for me that I may cast my whole care upon Him, and trust upon Him in all perils, for I know and am surely persuaded, that whatever I can imagine or think aforehand, it is nothing except He assist me with His Spirit, when the time is.

"I beseech you, therefore, Father, pray for me that such a complete harness of the Spirit, such boldness of mind may be given unto me, that I may out of a true faith say with David, 'I will not trust in my bow, and it is not my sword that shall save me.' . . . . I beseech you, pray, pray that I may enter into this fight only in the name of God, and that when all is past, I being not overcome, through His gracious aid, may remain, and stand fast in Him, till that day of the Lord, in the which, to them that obtain the victory shall be given the lively manna to eat, and a triumphant crown for evermore.

"Now, Father, I pray you help me to buckle on this gear a little better, for ye know the deepness of Satan, being an old soldier, and you have collared with him ere now. Blessed be God that hath ever aided you so well!" "Sir," he concludes by saying, "I have caused my man not only to read your armour unto me, but also to write it out. For it is not only no bare armour, but also well-buckled armour. I see not how it could be better. I thank you even from the bottom of my heart for it, and my prayer shall you not lack, trusting that you do the like for me. For indeed there is the help—and many things make confusion in the memory. . . . . Fare you well in Christ."

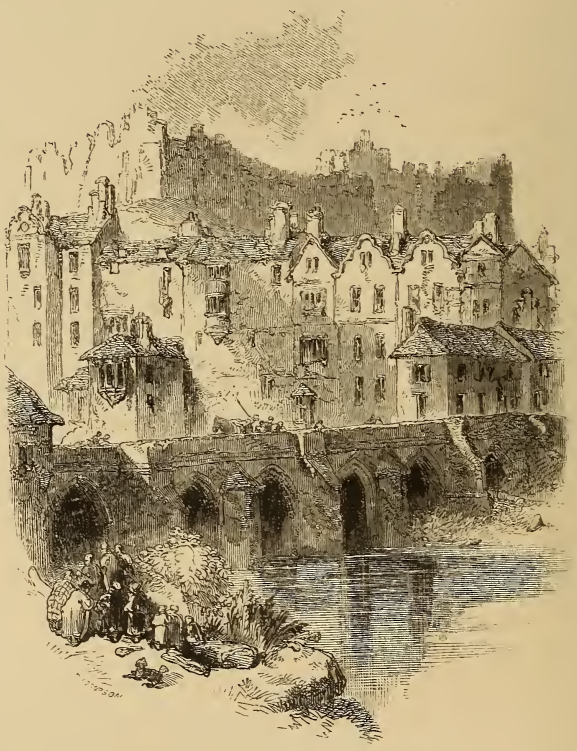
Thus it was that these truly great men prepared themselves for the conflict in which they were about to engage—we hear no idle lamentations, no unmanly groans issuing from their dark and narrow prison, but the quiet words of men of strong resolve, and the earnest voice of prayer; while a light from heaven pierces through the bars, revealing to the eye of faith the

gleam of armour and the upturned looks of pale and thoughtful faces, calm, and beautiful with holy peace, the faces of men, "who out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, who were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection."

When Lady Jane Grey was proclaimed queen, Ridley had preached against the claim of the Princess Mary, by order of the Council at St. Paul's Cross. If he did wrong in this, it was an error of judgment, not of heart. He was not one to refuse to "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's:" but he might feel in this instance very doubtful whether Mary had a just claim to be regarded as Cæsar. By the will of Henry the Eighth, she had been appointed first in the succession after her brother; but it might be a question whether Edward the Sixth, and the Council who held with him the supreme power over the realm, had not an equal right to appoint a successor to the throne, Mary's legitimate title having also been denied at one time by her father. Many of the Protestant gentlemen of England had, it is true, taken a different view of the question, and though abhorring popery, were yet stanch supporters of Mary's claims. Ridley, however, was far better acquainted with the views and the character of Mary than they were. He knew that there was nothing to hope from one of whose narrow mind and intolerant bigotry he had personal cognizance. And in his sermon he plainly declared his strong conviction, that if Mary were permitted to assume the title and office of queen, popery would again prevail. He knew too well that the true followers of Christ would be forbidden to "render unto God the things that are God's."

When, however, Mary was actually queen, and, in reply to the address of the Suffolk men, had publicly declared and promised, that liberty of opinion in religion should be allowed by her, Ridley repaired to Framlingham Castle, where the Queen then was, to offer her his submission. He would have acted with more wisdom had he remained quiet in both instances, but we have no right to assume that he did not act conscientiously. No sooner was Mary secure of the throne, than, with shameless treachery, she repeated her promise of religious toleration, with this artful sentence attached to it—"until such time as further order by common consent may be taken therein." Ridley met with a sorry reception at

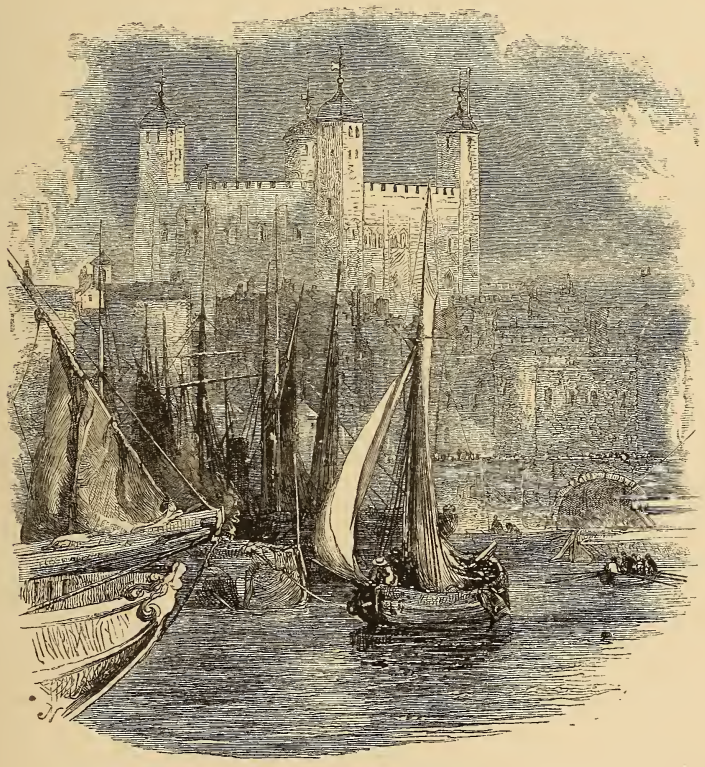
Framlingham Castle. His service was repulsed, and he was committed to the Tower as a traitor. He had been, not long before, translated to the see of Durham in his own northern country, but both appointments were annulled, and Bonner was formally restored to the bishopric of London.



DURHAM.

The Tower was so filled with prisoners, that Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, and Bradford, were shut up in one chamber, and there they were kept for six months. During this time, disputations were held in Convocation on various controversial questions, from which the most learned of the Protestant party, the Reformers in prison, were excluded; whilst the few who

were present, and who dared to advocate their principles, were clamoured down; till at length the Romanists, wakened to some sense of shame, at the scandal of a victory which they won by confining or silencing their opponents, agreed to transfer the debate to Oxford, there to be conducted



TOWER OF LONDON.

by the ex-bishops on the one hand, and certain commissioners from both universities on the other: and to Oxford, Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer were taken, and placed in the Bocardo prison.

This was the commencement of the memorable disputations at Oxford, which issued in the martyrdom of those three distinguished men.

Coverdale, in a note written by him upon a letter from Bishop Ridley to Bradford, says of Bocardo, that it is "a stinking and filthy prison for drunkards, etc., and the vilest sort of people." But there it was that those three noble and godly men were confined. Ridley was afterwards removed to the house of a Mr. Irish, the mayor of Oxford, to whose custody he was committed, and there he remained till the day of his death. While in prison, the diligence of this faithful and zealous servant of God was so untiring, that no less than fourteen treatises were composed by him. To those who, like himself and his companions, were shut up in prison for the truth, he wrote letters full of animating and consoling exhortations. The prospect of a dreadful death was before him, and the materials for writing were denied him; but he cut the lead from his windows, and shaped it into pencils, and he wrote on the margins of his books; and often by the hands of that devoted friend of the martyrs, Augustine Bernher, his letters and papers were carried to the distant prisons of God's afflicted people.

Never did the Romanists make a greater mistake, than by the course they followed in England towards their Protestant countrymen, in those days. They taught the people of the land to understand the real character of Popery, by showing them the use they would make of power when they possessed it. Whatever might have been the cause, whether from the character of the people, or from the knowledge of the Bible, which had been widely spread by the followers of Wycliffe throughout the land, one fact is not to be controverted, that the means which were employed with such fatal success to overthrow the scriptural faith in France, and Spain, and Italy, met with an utter failure in this country. Instead of crushing the spirit of the people, the Marian persecution roused it so effectually and so thoroughly, that to this hour the principles and the practices of Rome are repudiated with an honest indignation by the great body of the nation. Ridley was undoubtedly one of the most powerful adversaries whom the adherents of Rome had to encounter, as well as one of the very brightest ornaments of the Reformation. "His character," says the editor of his works, as published by the Parker Society, "is sufficiently depicted in his works: they indicate a mind of the very highest order, both as to power and acuteness: and where he fairly entered upon

a subject, he left but little for after writers to touch upon. In matters of controversy, his immense patristic learning gave him a decided advantage over all his antagonists; and the general idea of his importance to the cause of the Reformation, may be estimated from the words of one of his most distinguished adversaries: 'Latimer leaneth to Cranmer, Cranmer leaneth to Ridley, and Ridley leaneth to his own singular wit.'" The quaint lines wherein Quarles gives the character of Ridley follow:

"Read, in the progress of this blessed story
Rome's cursed cruelty, and Ridley's glory:
Rome's siren song; but Ridley's careless ear
Was deaf; they charmed, but Ridley would not hear.
Rome sung preferment, but brave Ridley's tongue
Contemned that false preferment which Rome sung.
Rome whispered death: but Ridley (whose great gain
Was godliness), he waved it with disdain.
Rome threatened durance, but great Ridley's mind
Was too too strong for threats or chains to bind.
Rome thundered death, but Ridley's dauntless eye
Stared in death's face, and scorned death standing by.
In spite of Rome for England's faith he stood,
And in the flames he sealed it with his blood."

I have, perhaps, brought forward already more of the opinions and arguments of Bishop Ridley than may be acceptable to some of my readers. But those passages which I have quoted, seemed to me of deep importance at the present day, as exhibiting both the views and the spirit of one of the great leaders of our Reformation, and at the risk of being tedious to careless minds, I have cited those extracts from his works. I must not, however, enter further into the conferences and discussions in which he bore a part, but refer my reader to the narrative of Foxe. The accuracy of the report which is given of the disputation at Oxford is vouched for by the fact that Jewell was one of the reporters.

"I perceive," said Ridley, "that you have writers and notaries present. By all likelihood our disputations shall be published. I beseech you, for God's sake, let me have liberty to speak my mind freely, and without interruption," etc.

Weston replies: "Among this whole company it shall be permitted

you to take two for your part." Ridley: "I will choose two, if there are any here with whom I am acquainted." Weston: "Here are two, which Master Cranmer had yesterday. Take them, if it please you." Ridley: "I am content with them; I trust they are honest men."

In the margin it is stated, that "these two notaries were Master Jewel, sometime Bishop of Salisbury, and Master Gilbert Mounson."

BISHOP JEWEL.

Part of Ridley's celebrated Farewell Letter cannot well be omitted in this paper. What calm dignity, and yet what loving tenderness, is there in the parting words of this godly pastor, written within the last fortnight of his pilgrimage on earth!

It opens with the following solemn and godly exordium: "At the name of Jesus let every knee bow, both of things of heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and let every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, unto the glory of God the Father, Amen."

Then follows this graceful and touching passage —"As a man minding to take a far journey, and to depart from his familiar friends, commonly and naturally hath a desire to bid his friends farewell before his departure; so likewise now I, looking daily when I should be called for to depart hence from you, do bid you all my dear brethren and sisters in Christ, that dwell upon the earth, after such manner as I can say, farewell." To his dear sister Alice, he gives affectionate and gentle counsel. He bids farewell to his well beloved brother John Ridley of the Waltone, and "to you," he adds, "my gentle and loving sister Elizabeth; whom beside the natural league of amity, your tender love, which you were said ever to bear towards me above the rest of your brethren doth bind me to love! Your daughter Elizabeth also I bid farewell, whom I love for the meek and gentle spirit that God hath given her, which is a precious thing in the sight of God."

An affecting account is given of the ceremony of Ridley's degradation, on which occasion his conduct was alike distinguished by Christian gentleness and firmness; and though he submitted to all the indignities which they put upon him, his voice was at the same time raised to declare that he allowed and consented to nothing that they did. "You were best to hold your peace," cried out the Bishop of Gloucester, "lest your mouth be stopped:" at which words one Ednidge, the reader then of the Greek lecture, standing by, said to Dr. Brookes; "Sir, the law is, that he should be gagged, therefore let him be gagged;" at which words Dr. Ridley, looking earnestly upon him, made no answer again, but with a sigh said; "Oh, well, well, well!" When they would have placed the chalice, and the wafer cake in his hands, Ridley said: "They shall not come in my hands, for if they do, they shall fall to the ground for all of me." Then there was one appointed to hold them in his hand. When afterwards, they put a book in his hand, and degraded him from preaching, saying; "We do take from you the office of preaching the gospel." The gentle sufferer gave a great sigh, and looking up toward heaven said: "O Lord God, forgive them their wickedness!"

This was his last evening; and when the party were withdrawn, and he had washed himself, he went down to supper, and there told Mistress

Irish that the following day was to be his wedding day, and he invited her to be present at his marriage—meaning his death. It is a remarkable coincidence, that, as it happened in the case of Bishop Hooper, so it did with Ridley. On Hooper's journey to the stake at Gloucester, the hostess of the inn at Cirencester, had expressed herself as the open enemy to his faith, saying, "that with all his zeal, he would recant rather than burn," yet had wept over him, and treated him with the most attentive kindness: so it was now with the once harsh and cruel hostess of Bishop Ridley. When she heard the meek and godly martyr speak cheerfully of his death, and invite her to it as to a marriage, all her prejudices gave way; her hard heart was melted, and Mistress Irish wept. But Ridley comforted her, and said, "O Mistress Irish, you love me not now, I see well enough, for in that you weep, it doth appear you will not be at my marriage, neither are content therewith. Indeed you be not so much my friend, as I thought you had been; but quiet yourself: though my breakfast shall be somewhat sharp and painful, yet I am sure my supper shall be more pleasant and sweet." His brother-in-law, and unflinching friend, who was present, offered to watch all night with him. But he said, "No, no, that you shall not. For I mind, God willing, to go to bed, and to sleep as quietly to-night as ever I did in my life." So his brother departed, exhorting him to be of good cheer, and to take his cross quietly, for the reward was great.

On the following morning Ridley came forth to die. He wore his usual black-furred gown and velvet cap, and walked between the mayor and one of the aldermen. As he passed the Bocardo prison, he looked up, hoping to see his beloved friend Cranmer, but he saw him not. Foxe relates that Cranmer was then engaged in disputation with one Friar Soto; but others, and among them Burnet, affirm that Cranmer beheld the sad procession and the burning of Ridley and Latimer from the roof of his prison, and, falling on his knees, prayed God to strengthen his companions in their agony, and to prepare him for his own. As they approached the place of execution, Ridley, as before related, saw Latimer following, and ran to meet him, and kissed him; and, as they that stood near reported, comforted him, saying, "Be of good heart, brother, for God will either

assuage the fury of the flame, or else strengthen us to abide it." Thus they met, never to part again; side by side they went, and side by side they suffered and died. The quaint and touching narrative is very graphic. After giving away his apparel, "he gave away besides divers other small things to gentlemen standing by, divers of them pitifully weeping; as to Sir Henry Lea he gave a new groat, and to divers of my Lord Williams' gentlemen, some napkins, some nutmegs, and rases of ginger, his dial, and such other things as he had about him, to every one that stood next him. Some plucked the points of his hose. Happy was he that might get any rag of him."

"It were better to me to go in my truss still," he then said, addressing himself to his brother, whose true and constant affection kept him at his side. "No," quoth his brother, "it will put you to more pain, and the truss will do a poor man good." "Be it so, in the name of God," replied Ridley, and so unlaced himself. Then standing up upon the stone at the foot of the stake, he held up his hand, and said, "O heavenly Father, I give Thee most hearty thanks, for that Thou hast called me to be a professor of Thee, even unto death. I beseech Thee, Lord God, take mercy upon this realm of England, and deliver the same from all her enemies." "Good fellow," said he to the smith, who was fastening the chain about his waist, and knocking in the staple (and he took the chain in his hand and shook it), "knock it in hard, for the flesh will have its course."

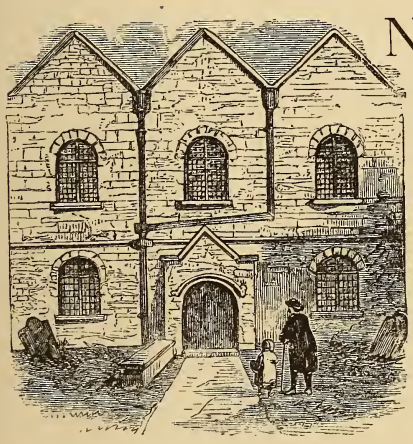
Dreadful were the sufferings which this man of God had to endure. When first he saw the fire flaming up towards him, he cried with a loud voice, "In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum: Domine, recipe spiritum meum;" repeating oftentimes this latter part in English, "Lord, Lord, receive my spirit!" But afterwards, when his beloved friend Latimer had been sometime relieved from all suffering, Ridley, in his agony, cried out for more fire: for owing to the way in which the faggots had been placed, his lower limbs were consumed, before any vital part of his body had been reached, and he continued crying out, "I cannot burn," as he struggled in the flames; never, however, forgetting to call upon God, intermingling the cry with, "Lord, have mercy upon me!" His brother, in his anxiety to save him from pain, unintentionally added to his sufferings;

for when Ridley had desired them for Christ's sake to let the fire come unto him, not knowing what he did, his brother had heaped the faggots upon him. A merciful bystander, with more presence of mind, cleared away a passage for the flames, and then at last the fire did its work, and the blessed martyr falling down at Latimer's feet, yielded up his spirit. The flesh had had its course, but God had given him all the grace he needed; and during the whole of those indescribable agonies, while he poured forth dreadful cries, his courage and endurance never failed him, and he was enabled to be true to his own words before he prepared himself for the stake: "So long as the breath is in my body, I will never deny my Lord Christ and His known truth: God's will be done in me. I commit our cause to Almighty God, which shall indifferently judge all." Thus died Nicholas Ridley.

The place at which these two blessed martyrs suffered was in front of Baliol College, at that time a ditch by the town-wall, but now filled up and made a street: the exact spot was near the corner of Broad Street: ashes and burnt sticks were, not long since, dug up at the spot.

But the place which seems to bring him before us most vividly, is the garden of Pembroke Hall in the town of Cambridge, that garden in which he tells us he learned without book almost all Paul's epistles. There it was that his meek and earnest spirit received light and food and strength, from the inspired word and the promised Comforter, and was prepared for that path of earthly sorrow and shame, and yet of heavenly light and joy in which he went forward till he passed from earth to heaven. The old walls are still standing—the broad path with its narrow border of flowers on the one side, and its smooth and shaven grass-plot on the other, are probably such as they then were. A tree which Ridley planted in the year 1540 was standing till about eight years ago, when it was blown down: it was a fine old oak. To use his own words, "The walls, butts, and trees, if they could speak, would bear me witness;"—and they do still bear him witness, for who can pace that garden walk and look around upon the old brick wall, and the sweet flowers, and the leafy branches of that ancient garden, and not feel that Ridley's spirit seems to haunt the quiet place.

CHESTER, LANCASTER, DEANE.



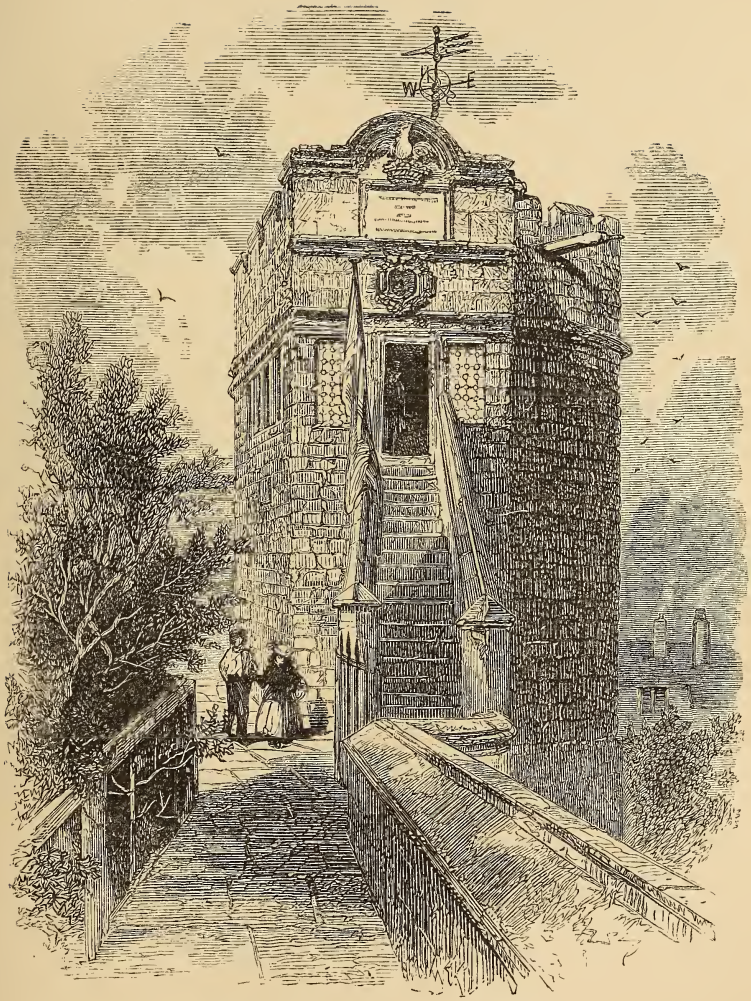
NO city in Great Britain, few in Europe, are at once so ancient and so picturesque as Chester. I had long heard of its characteristic features, and expected, when I first visited it, to be carried back some centuries by its antique architecture. But I was not prepared for a walk of nearly two miles along its ancient walls, presenting, at almost every turn, some new and striking point of view. Its rows had been described to me, but I had failed to picture them to myself in their quaint and curious beauty. But that which I was wholly unprepared for, was the prospect of the Welsh mountains to the west, a low range, but a very lovely one, always wearing some changeful aspect, whether brightened in places with sunshine, while aerial mists float here and there along their sides, now veiling, now revealing the features of their varied cultivation; or shrouded over by one dark mass of vapour of deepest purple, with a rich but lurid glare of fiery orange, colouring the sky above their jagged summits. The river too, the broad beautiful river, with the old picturesque bridge just below the magnificent weir, which crosses the stream transversely, and over which the waters rush with their perpetual roar; or, farther down the river,

the new and graceful Grosvenor Bridge with its single arch, spanning the whole stream of the wide waters, and just beyond, the lovely meadow-flat of the Rhoodee, round which the river rolls with a bold and noble sweep, half encircling that rich green plain, which is the most beautiful spot of the kind that I have ever seen. But let us pass, my reader, to the north gate of the city, from whence, when the sky is clear, we may see the little town and castle of Flint, and farther on, at full tide, the gleaming waters of the open sea. It was close to this spot that a small foot-bridge was formerly suspended high above the old canal, which lies deep beneath, the one end resting on the city walls, the other upon that rocky cliff, surmounted by the buildings of the blue-coat school, and the chapel and alms-houses of little St. John's. The spot, as seen from beneath, the lofty walls of dark red rock on either side, the sluggish waters below, and the cavern-like arch which rises high above them, has been likened to the Rialto of Venice, the height and depth and gloom making it even more strikingly picturesque.

It was here that a dark and narrow prison formerly stood. I have met with aged persons in Chester, who still remember that prison, and the narrow foot-bridge hanging in the air that led to it. Those who passed along the walls in times gone by looked down upon that miserable dungeon, and kind and feeling hearts were often moved with pity for its inmates; and many a charitable hand was extended to drop a groat, or some other small piece of money through a hole upon the city wall, into that dark prison.

That was the place where one of the martyrs of the Marian persecution was confined. His offence was the common one in those days, the open and fearless avowal of those truths of Holy Scripture, which the idolatrous Church of Rome denounces as heresy, and which man, taking upon himself the prerogative of God, blasphemously forbids his fellow-men to hold.

Every rank in life, at the period when the great struggle between light and darkness, truth and error, prevailed, produced some bright examples of devotedness to the simple faith of Christ; and many of the most remarkable instances were found in that class which



PHŒNIX TOWER, ON THE WALLS OF CHESTER.

is not only the poorest, but the most unlettered and ignorant. One signal proof was thus afforded, that the doctrine held by the Reformers was of God.

George Marsh was a farmer in the rural parish of Deane in Lancashire, and bore a name still very common in the neighbourhood. Let us turn our steps to the early home of the martyr, let us visit the parish in which he preached and taught the truth for which he died, and the country where he wandered about like a hunted roe, a marked and persecuted man, because he dared to be true to his conscience and to the faith of Christ. Here it was on Deane Moor, (the place was then bare, bleak, and lonely,) that he met one of his friends at sunset, and "after we had consulted together," he says, "on my business, not without hearty prayer, kneeling on our knees, we departed. I not fully determining what to do; but, taking leave of my friend, said, I doubted not but God, according as our prayer and trust was, would give me such wisdom and counsel as should be most to His honour and glory, the profit of my neighbours and brethren in the world, and obtaining of my eternal salvation by Christ in heaven."

When it was first intimated to George Marsh that he was in danger of being arrested, he doubted whether to fly from the danger that threatened him, or to remain: he says, "In the meantime I ceased not by earnest prayer to ask and seek counsel of God, who is the Giver of all good gifts." Then it was that he met the friend, as we have just seen, and they two kneeled down together on the dark and desolate moor, and prayed for direction to Him who graciously points out to His people the path in which they should go—saying; "This is the way, walk ye in it." In answer to these earnest prayers, he received such guidance from above as quite determined him that, at a time when the very existence of the truth was at stake, it was his duty not to run away from the danger, as under ordinary circumstances might have been allowable, but by facing it boldly, afford an unquestionable proof of the sincerity and stedfastness of his faith. We nevertheless find the future martyr none the less earnestly, and by exactly the same means, preparing himself for the difficulties and trials which, he was well aware, were now awaiting him. "So betimes in the morning," says Marsh, "I arose, and after I had said the

English Litany as my custom was with my other prayers, kneeling on my knees by my friend's bedside, I prepared myself to go to Smithills, and as I was going thitherward, I went to the houses of Harry Widdowes, of my mother-in-law, of Ralph Yeton, and of the wife of Thomas Richardson, desiring them to pray for me." From Smithills he was summoned to Lathom House, and he says, "So the next day, which was Wednesday, we arose, *prayed*, and came to Lathom."

It was on the 12th of March, 1555—that first memorable year of suffering and death to so many of God's saints and witnesses in England—on the Monday before Palm Sunday, that George Marsh first heard, in his mother's house at Deane, of the search then making for him in Bolton, which is about a mile from Deane. One Roger Wrinstone, and other servants of Master Barton of Smithills, had been sent to apprehend him; and they were ordered to take him first to their master, at Smithills, and then, on the following day, to the Earl of Derby and his council, at Lathom House, to be examined in matters of religion. He had only come to Deane at that time, it appears, on a visit to his mother, perhaps to see her and his children, previously to his departure for Germany or to Denmark, as he afterwards told the Earl of Derby. The earl, however, had been on the look-out for him, having heard of him, he said, as a heretic; and had intended to order a search to be made for him, and to take him either in Lancashire, or in London.

Lord Derby, as he himself told Marsh—when in King Edward's parliament, had constantly opposed himself to the acts brought forward for the Reformation. He seems to have been willing to spare the lives of the Protestants, if by the exercise of his authority, and by the force of his arguments and persuasions, he could induce them to recant, but to have shown no pity towards those with whom he was unable to prevail. He knew his influence to be great, and probably supposed that he had only to exercise it, in order to prove it all-powerful. He busied himself that same year about Bradford, another Lancashire man, complaining before the Parliament, that he had done more hurt by his letters, and by private exhortations to those who came to him in prison, than he had ever done when at liberty by his preaching. He sent one of his servants, however, to

Bradford, declaring his desire "to be a good lord to him," and even offering to exert his influence with the queen, to allow him to leave England, if he would consent to go where she might be pleased to send him; but Bradford replied, that he would rather be burned in England; "for he knew the queen would send him either to Paris or Louvaine, or some such place, where forthwith they would burn him."

George Marsh had passed the night at the house of a friend. On awaking in the morning, letters were put into his hand, whose advice was, that he should in no wise fly, but abide, and boldly confess the faith of Jesus Christ. This advice was in accordance with his own conscience and judgment; and from that time he consulted no more whether it would be better to fly or to tarry. He made up his mind not to fly, but to go to Master Barton at Smithills, and "patiently bear such cross as it should please God to lay upon his shoulders." And thus it was, that after he had commended himself to the prayers of his friends, and entreated them to comfort his mother, and be good to his little children; for, as he supposed, they should see his face no more until the last day: he took leave of them all, with many tears on both sides, and went of his own free accord to Smithills. On his arriving there, Barton showed him a letter from the Earl of Derby, wherein he was commanded to send George Marsh, with others, to Lathom, and had charged the brother of Marsh and one William Marsh, who was probably a relation, to deliver him the next day by ten o'clock, before the earl or his council.

There he appeared at the time appointed, but not till four o'clock in the afternoon was he summoned to the presence of Lord Derby and his council. A long and vexatious questioning of this simple-hearted minister then took place; and when it was ended, he adds: "After much ado, the earl commanded me to ward (that is, to prison), in a cold, windy, stone house," where, he adds, "there was a little room, where I lay two nights without any bed, saving a few great canvass tent-cloths; and, that done, I had a pair of sheets, but no woollen clothes: and so continued till Palm-Sunday, occupying myself as well as I could in meditation, prayer, and study, for no man could be suffered to come to me, but my keeper twice a day, when he brought me meat and drink."

On Palm-Sunday after dinner he was again called before the earl and his council, among whom were Sir John Biron and the vicar of Prescott; Sir William Norris and Sir Pierce Leigh, who had been of the party at his former examination, were now absent. He was questioned as he had been before, on the sacrament, and then the vicar of Prescott took him aside and for a long time conferred with him. On returning to the earl and his company, the vicar spoke kindly in behalf of the poor prisoner, saying that, "his answers were sufficient for a beginner who did not profess a perfect knowledge in that matter, until he had learned further."

The earl was now very well pleased, and said he doubted not, but by the help of the vicar of Prescott, Marsh would be made conformable in other things. So after many fair words the prisoner was dismissed and a bed and a fire were ordered for him, and liberty was given him, "to go among the servants, on the condition that he did no harm with his communications among them."

During these two examinations George Marsh had replied to the questions put to him, with only that wise prudence, which the circumstances in which he was placed demanded. So it had seemed to him at the time; but afterwards, on strictly searching himself he was not satisfied; his conscience told him that he had been all the while too anxiously seeking to escape the dangers which threatened him, and that his replies had been rather evasions than answers; he felt that he had not been so straightforward as he ought to have been, and he was deeply grieved that he had not with more boldness confessed Christ, but had sought to deliver himself out of their hands, so far as he could do so, without openly denying his Lord. The thought of his faithlessness and his fears sorely troubled him, and made him feel ashamed of his weakness. He cried earnestly to God, that He would strengthen him with His Holy Spirit, and give him boldness to confess Christ, and would deliver him from the snare of enticing words. Other examinations followed, and now this poor persecuted servant of Christ was enabled to keep to his stedfastness of mind—and would not consent to agree to the arguments and persuasions of his subtle and wily opponents. He was commanded by Lord Derby to be taken to Lancaster Castle, and lodged there in prison.

Thus George Marsh was taken from the home of his childhood. It was in this hilly country that he passed his early years. These wooded dingles, where the quietness knows no disturbance, but from the gurgling of the clear streams which murmur through them, and from the sweet notes of the merry birds singing their welcome to the joyous spring, where the wild rose trails its luxuriant branches of vivid varnished green, and puts forth its first delicate leaflets, where the woodbine twines its graceful wreaths, where the clustered stems of the hazel are richly tasselled with golden catkins, and the primrose decks the sheltered banks with its fresh blossoms, and nestles in the velvet moss at the roots of the hawthorn and the hazel, where the full bright sunshine fills every little dell with genial warmth and glowing radiance, glancing here and there among the bursting foliage of the old gnarled oaks and the tall shafts of the yet leafless ash:—here, in these sweet sylvan solitudes, were the pleasant haunts of this good man, and it was in this sweet spring season, that he was taken hence, never to return. Here he has often wandered in his merry childhood, seeking the first flowers of the spring or the brown nuts of autumn; and here in the grave and thoughtful season of his early manhood he may have sat, when the toil of the day was done, on many a long summer evening or in the quiet hours of the Sabbath day,—his Bible in his hand, and his heart filled with adoring love—musing on the wondrous love of Him who gave His own and only Son to death, that all who simply trust in Him and call upon His name, may never perish but have everlasting life.

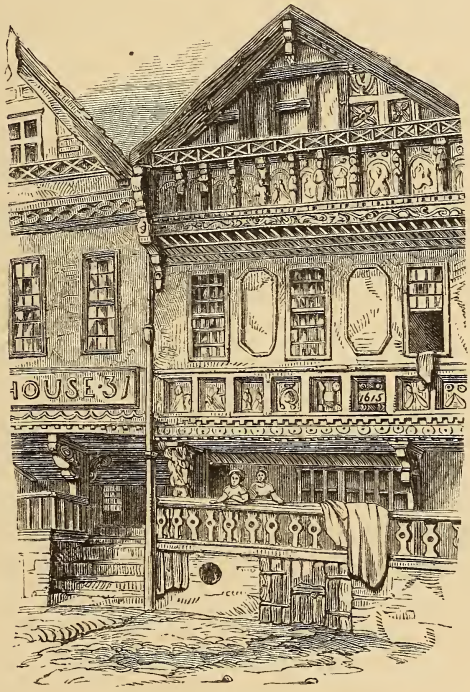
He had been a farmer, following the calling of his father and his brothers, till the death of his wife, when he resolved to devote himself wholly to that high office to which he was undoubtedly called by the Holy Spirit; and leaving his young children to the care and tenderness of his mother, he set out for Cambridge. There he pursued his studies, and prepared himself for the ministry; and after he was ordained, he became the curate of Lawrence Saunders, of Church Langton in Leicestershire, another eminent servant of God, who, like himself, witnessed a good confession, and died a martyr to the truths he preached.

At Lancaster Castle, George Marsh was placed in the common prison among thieves and the worst and vilest characters there, and with them

brought up to the bar with irons on his feet, before Lord Derby. On the arrival of Dr. Cotes, the bishop of Chester, at Lancaster, to set up there the idolatry of the mass and the other superstitions of popery, he was requested to send for Marsh and to examine him. This at first, he refused, saying, he would have nothing to do with heretics. But he sent for the gaoler and rebuked him, because he had suffered the poor prisoner to fare so well, "willing to have me," says Marsh, "more strictly kept and dieted. But if his lordship," he adds, "were tabled with me, I do think he would judge our fare but slender enough." The schoolmaster and others were also rebuked for speaking to him, and the jailor for suffering them to do so. But while in Lancaster Castle, the innocent prisoner was more and more confirmed in his faith and courage, and daily he and his "prison-fellow" prayed and read the Scriptures in so audible a voice, that the people passing by would seat themselves beneath the prison walls to listen to the word of God, when they read it. For this also Marsh was rebuked. We are reminded by the account, of those two holy men, who, in the prison at Philippi, prayed, and sang praises unto God, and the prisoners heard them.

He was removed to Chester, and we now return thither. Come with me through this fine old gateway, whose groined arches, blackened with time and smoke, lead into the Abbey Square. That building on the right, as we enter, is the Bishop's Palace, in former times the residence of the Abbots of Chester, and still joining on to the old Cathedral. The upper part of the building alone is modern, but the ground-floor, which now lies below the level of the garden-court, is as it was in the days of the Reformation. It was here in this ancient hall, that Bishop Cotes summoned George Marsh to appear before him, and held his first conference with him—no other person on that occasion being present. Others came afterwards to question him, but they all failed to shake his constancy; and, time after time, during his imprisonment of four months within the precincts of the Palace, he was examined and sent back to his miserable prison. The old dark door-way, on the left side of this groined archway, opening into the Abbey Square, was the porter's lodge; and behind the little chamber occupied by the porter, lay the dungeon

in which George Marsh was confined; for a bishop's prison was always a portion of the bishop's palace in those days. Not many years ago, as one who had seen the place, and described it to me, told me, the staples and rings of rusty iron by which the prisoner was fastened to the wall of that dark and miserable dungeon, were to be seen.



BISHOP LLOYD'S HOUSE, CHESTER.

In the Lady Chapel of the cathedral, George Marsh was brought as a prisoner by his keeper and others, with bills and divers weapons, keeping guard over him. The bishop sat as the judge; and beside him stood Master George Wensloe, the then chancellor of Chester, who opened the proceedings by a fulsome address to the bishop, comparing the prisoner to a diseased sheep, and the judge to a good shepherd. The written

answers of George Marsh, at his various examinations were here produced, and read to him, and he was asked by the chancellor whether he would stand to them. To each question he answered, "Yes." "In your last examination," then said the chancellor, "among many other damnable and schismatical heresies, you said that the church and doctrine taught and set forth in King Edward's time, was the true church, and the doctrine the doctrine of the true church, and that the church of Rome is not the true and catholic church?" "I so said indeed," replied Marsh, "and I believe it to be true."

We pass over the particulars of what occurred, till we are told that the bishop took a writing out of his bosom, and began to read the sentence of condemnation. When he had read almost the half of it, the chancellor interposed, and said, "Good my lord, stay, stay: for if ye proceed any further, it will be too late to recall it again:" and the bishop paused. Then the popish priests, and many others of the ignorant people (for a crowd was collected), called upon Marsh to recant; saying to him: "For shame man! remember thyself, and recant." They bade him kneel down and pray, and said they would pray for him. So they kneeled down, and he desired them to pray for him, and he would pray for them. But soon after, we are told that the bishop put his spectacles again upon his nose, and read some more lines of his sentence; and then again the chancellor, with "a glavering and smiling countenance," called the bishop, and said: "Yet, good my lord, once again stay; for if that word is spoken, all is passed: no relenting will then serve." But the resolution of the prisoner wavered not: his sentence was read to the end. "Now," said the bishop, "will I no more pray for thee, than I will for a dog." But Marsh answered, "Notwithstanding, I will pray for your lordship."

He was delivered by the bishop to the sheriffs of the city. His late keeper parted from him with tears, saying, "Farewell, good George." And now being given over to the civil power, the prisoner was carried to the dismal prison-cell on the city walls, near the north gate. There were a few citizens in Chester, who, we are told, "loved him in God for the gospel's sake," although they were not personally acquainted

with him: and sometimes in the evening, at the hole upon the wall of the city that opened into the dark prison, they would call to him, and ask him how he did. Marsh would answer them cheerfully, that "he did well, and thanked God most highly that He would vouchsafe of His mercy to appoint him to be a witness of His truth, and to suffer for the same, wherein he did rejoice, beseeching God that He would give him grace, not to faint under the cross, but patiently bear the same, to His glory and the comfort of His church. And so he often spoke, at various times, as one whose chief desire was to be with Christ. Once or twice he had money cast him in at the same hole, for which he gave God thanks."

The day appointed for his execution came. The sheriffs of the city, whose names were Amry and Cooper, with their officers, went to the North gate, and took out Marsh from the prison, who went with them most humbly and meekly, with a lock upon his feet. There was an old custom, peculiar to Chester, to put money into the hands of a felon going to execution, that he might give it to a priest to say masses for his soul; "whereby," says Foxe, "they might, as they thought, be saved;" and money was offered to Marsh for this purpose. But he said he could not meddle with it; and entreated that some good man would take what the people were disposed to bestow, and give it to the prisoners, or the poor. And so he went forward with his Bible in his hand, his looks always fixed upon the open page; and many of the people said as he passed along, "This man goeth not unto his death as a thief, or as one that deserveth to die."

The place where the stake and the faggots were prepared, was then an open space, near to the Spittal Boughton. If I am not mistaken, it was on the bank, now a pleasant garden, sloping in terraces towards the river; for it was here that, up to a late period, the gallows were erected, whenever an execution took place in Chester. The spot was regarded as desecrated ground, and lay waste, till a magistrate of the city, charmed with the beauty of the prospect which it commanded, purchased the ground which is opposite his house, and laid it out as a garden, in terraces and plots of flowers. Is it not a lovely prospect—the dark blue mountain side, seeming

to lock in the broad stream of the winding river toward the west, and to the south, right before us, the rich green meadows, with the woods of Eaton Hall bounding the view!

We may picture to ourselves the spot as it appeared on that most sad and shameful day. The holy martyr with his Bible, prized more dearly than his life by him, keeping his eyes full upon it, as he turned them away from the pardon of the Queen, "a writing under a great seal," which was placed before him, as the custom was on those occasions—the last bait of Satan, to tempt him from the stedfastness of his faith; and yet not quite the last temptation, for here an opening to escape was offered, which Foxe had evidently never heard of, but which is recorded in the old documents of the city. One of the sheriffs, Master Cooper, and his armed followers, touched to the heart, no doubt by the meek endurance of the faithful sufferer, determined to attempt a rescue. A struggle and a fight ensued. It ended however in the defeat of the brave man and his followers. He was compelled to flee for his life, and escaped over Holt bridge, some few miles down the river Dee, into Wales. There he remained, hiding himself among the fastnesses of the mountains an outlawed man till Elizabeth came to the throne, when he returned with an honoured name to his native city. Such an attempt is not recorded on any other like occasion. We gladly relate it to the lasting credit of the good old city of Chester.

The execution proceeded. Marsh would have spoken to the people, declaring the cause of his death, and exhorting them to cleave unto Christ; but Amry, the other sheriff, would not permit him to speak, and said to him, "George Marsh, we must have no sermoning now." "Master," he replied, "I cry you mercy," and so, kneeling down, prayed. It was indeed a cruel death that he suffered; for they added an unusual torment, "a thing made like a firkin filled with tar, was placed over his head, and the fire being unskilfully made, and driven to and fro by a strong wind, he suffered great extremity in his death, which, notwithstanding, he abode very patiently." They that stood lower down on the bank, and looked upon the shapeless mass which the body of the poor sufferer presented, as he stood a long time tormented in the fire without moving, supposed that he was dead, when suddenly, he spread abroad his

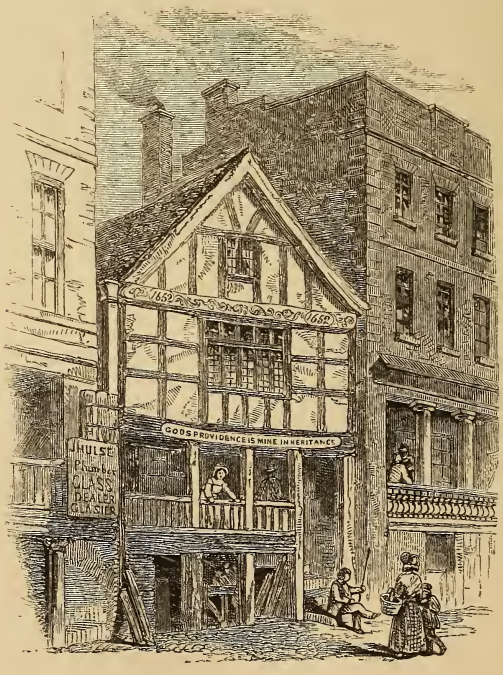
STREET IN CHESTER.

arms, and crying out, "Father of heaven, have mercy upon me," so yielded his spirit into the hands of the Lord. "Upon this," adds Foxe, "many of the people said that he was a martyr, and died marvellous patiently and godly, which thing caused the bishop shortly after to make a sermon in the cathedral church, wherein he affirmed that the said Marsh was a heretic, burnt like a heretic, and was a fire-brand in hell." This wretched prelate died soon afterwards, as many thought, under the just judgment of God.

Before passing away from Chester I may be permitted to allude to the well-known story of the arrival of Dr. Cole at the old city on his way to Ireland, bearing with him the commission of the Queen to institute proceedings against the Irish Protestants. During his stay at the "Blue Posts," then the principal inn or hotel in Chester, the mayor, a bigoted Romanist, waited upon Dr. Cole. In the course of conversation, the latter took out a box, saying, "Here is that which shall lash the heretics of Ireland," alluding to his commission which the box contained. The words were overheard by Mistress Edmonds, the landlady of the hotel, who was a sound Protestant. When the mayor took his leave, Dr. Cole ceremoniously attended on him, as he walked down the stairs. Opening the box, the good woman quickly took out the commission, and substituted in its place a pack of cards wrapped in paper. The doctor returned to his chamber, suspecting nothing of what had been done, took up the box, and going to the water-side, the wind and weather serving him, he set sail for Ireland.

In due time the notorious doctor arrived in Dublin, and appeared before Lord Fitzwalters, the Lord Deputy, and the privy council. The box was opened by the secretary, when instead of the Queen's commission against the Irish Protestants, a pack of cards was found, the knave of clubs lying uppermost. Nothing could be done without a fresh commission, and Dr. Cole returned to England to obtain it. It was a long and tedious journey in those days, and while the doctor was waiting for a wind on the water-side, news came that the wretched Queen had been stopped in her career by death. Her successor, Elizabeth, was so delighted with the story, that she granted a pension of forty pounds a year to the worthy landlady, Elizabeth Edmonds.

I had often enquired, during my residence in Chester, for the locality of the "Blue Posts:" and could not for some time obtain any satisfactory information. A small and wretched public house was pointed out as the place; but the pompous Dr. Cole was not likely to tarry in such a lodging, or the mayor of Chester to wait upon him there. I was one day in a large house near St. Peter's Church, and admiring a fine old spacious apartment. "This room possesses a peculiar interest," said the lady of the house, "for this house was then the principal inn in Chester, and this very room the chief apartment of the Blue Posts. Here it was that the landlady of the inn took from its case, the commission of Queen Mary, against the Protestants of Ireland, putting the pack of cards in its place, which Dr. Cole carried with him to Dublin."



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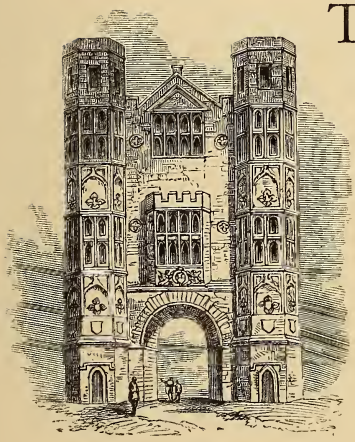


THE design of these pages is not to set forth baseless legends of spotless and perfect saints; but facts in the lives of men of like passions with ourselves. Far from being faultless, they were conscious of much sin and infirmity. The writer and the reader of their lives would be strangely misled, if they looked for perfection in them. They were men who had neither merits to spare for others, nor righteousness sufficient to save themselves; men whose simple dependence was on Jesus Christ and Him crucified; and who were always looking out of self, and unto Jesus, as the Author and Finisher of their faith, and the ONE MEDIATOR between God and man: men who were so conscious of their own sinful infirmities, and of their need of the grace which is in Christ Jesus, that they were "glad rather to glory in their infirmities, that the power of Christ might rest upon them."

Thomas Cranmer was a disciple of this school, a man of many rare and admirable qualities, many lovely and holy graces, but not without infirmity and defect. His character in some respects presents a strange paradox of strength and weakness, of truth and error. His faults were seldom those of commission, but rather the yielding to others, instead of being true,

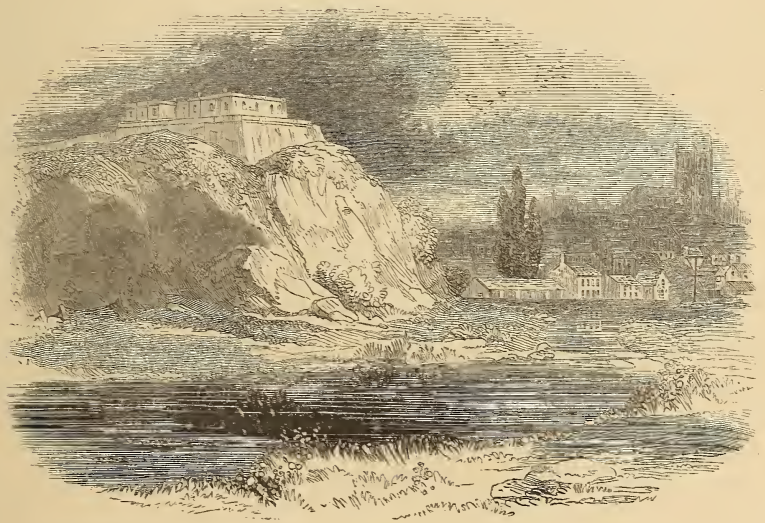
to the convictions of his own conscience. He seems to have excelled Latimer and Ridley in the meekness of wisdom, but to have fallen short of them in decision and firmness of character. Few characters of such eminence have been so attacked or vilified as he has been; and bitter execration has been heaped upon one sad act, his momentary denial of that faith, which it cost him the energies and the labours of his life to establish in this realm. But they who have thus maligned him, have been forgetful of one fact, that the great apostle, whom they have exclusively

CRANMER.

claimed, and presumptuously appropriated as the Prince of the Apostles, and the first link in their so-called unbroken chain of apostolic succession, was even more guilty in that one especial sin. For truly it was with brokenness of heart, in sorrow and in shame, that Cranmer denied the faith, with the certainty of that horrible death before him, by which already a multitude of his brethren had actually suffered. But Peter denied his Lord with curses and with oaths, before one of his brethren had suffered.

They should remember, too, that while their own Gardiner, in his dying words exclaimed, "I have sinned like Peter; but, like Peter, I have not repented." Never was a repentance more deep and genuine than that of Cranmer's. "He was an image of sorrow," says a spectator, "the dolour of his heart bursting out at his eyes in plenty of tears. He presented a spectacle to move the heart both of friend and foe."

We should pay, I fear, a useless visit to the place of Cranmer's birth. In the year 1790, traces might be seen of the walks and pleasure-



NOTTINGHAM.

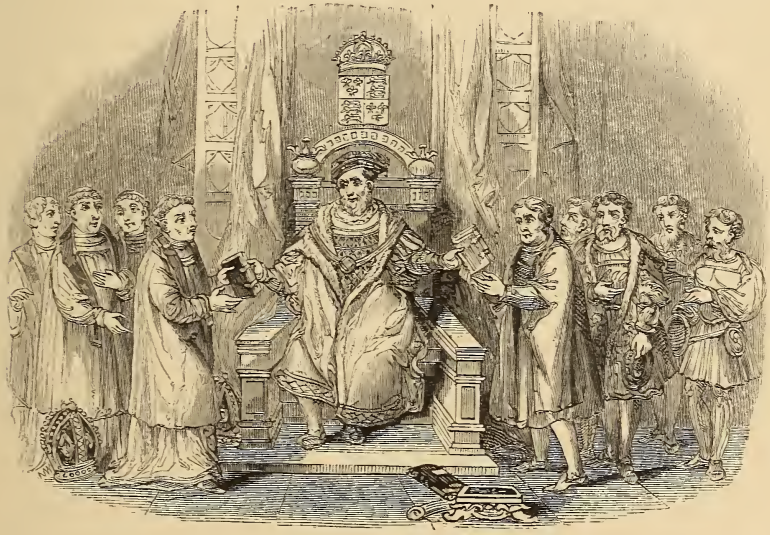
grounds which belonged to the mansion of his fathers. Tradition likewise speaks of a small rising-ground or mount, in the immediate neighbourhood of the house, from the summit of which in his more peaceful days, he was accustomed to survey the surrounding scenery, and listen to the music of the village-bells. But we are told that this memorial of the archbishop has wholly disappeared. The mansion stood in Aslacton, a hamlet at no great distance from the town of Nottingham. The family

of Cranmer was of high respectability; one of his ancestors having come over at the Norman conquest, among the companions of William the Conqueror; and the immediate forefathers of the primate had left the family residence at Cranmer Hall, in Lincolnshire, and settled at Aslacton, on a marriage with the heiress of that name and place. We fear that nothing but the name would now be found to furnish any link of association between Cranmer Hall and the martyr.

Thomas Cranmer was the second son of the owner of Aslacton, and, while he was yet a child, his father died. His only schoolmaster, during his boyhood, was a rude parish-clerk, who, by his harsh and churlish disposition, did little to recommend his lessons to his youthful pupil. He was early trained in all those manly sports and hardy exercises which were common to gentlemen of his degree in those days. He was so admirable a horseman, that even in after years he was able to mount and master the roughest or most high-mettled steed in his stables at Lambeth. His mother, however, designed him for a learned and studious life, and sent her son, at the early age of fourteen, to Jesus College, Cambridge. There he took his degree; and, in his twenty-second year, he was elected fellow of his college. He soon, however, vacated his fellowship, by marrying, before he had attained his twenty-third year. His wife was a gentlewoman, but of a reduced family; she died in child-bed, within the year of their marriage, and her infant did not survive her.

Cranmer had remained at Cambridge, as reader at Buckingham (which is now known as Magdalene) College, but his character and his attainments were so highly esteemed, that he was soon after re-elected to his forfeited fellowship at Jesus College. He had been indeed, as he continued to the end of his life, a diligent and patient student. Whatever course of study he pursued, he made himself master of it, never reading without pen in hand, and making notes and extracts; or marking those passages which struck him. He had made himself thoroughly acquainted with the sophistries of the schoolmen, according to the established system of the universities in those days: but when Erasmus came to reside at Cambridge, his attention was at once turned to the enlightened and enlarged views of that remarkable man. He was led

on by a divine Teacher, however, to the pursuit of far higher studies. In order to understand the great question then beginning to agitate the minds, not only of the common people, but of learned theologians, namely, whether the Romish Church, or the Holy Scriptures should be regarded as the rule of faith, Cranmer found it necessary to make himself well acquainted with the one inspired book; and he therefore set himself to the diligent study of the Old and New Testaments, not



HENRY VIII. GIVING THE BIBLE TO THE PEOPLE.—*(From the Title-page of Cranmer's, or the Great Bible.)*

merely in the Latin translation of the Vulgate, the text book of the Church of Rome, but in the original Hebrew and Greek. It was in the year 1519, that Cranmer first devoted himself to this great work, and for three years, he was thus occupied with God's statutes; "forasmuch as he perceived he could not judge indifferently in any weighty matters, without a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures; therefore, before he was infected with any man's opinions or errors, he applied his whole study therein."

The niece of Cranmer had married a gentleman of property named Cressy, who resided at Waltham, and Cranmer had received the two sons of his kinswoman as his pupils at Cambridge. An infectious disorder which broke out at the university had induced him to remove with them to their father's house. While they were residing there, the king came with his suite to Waltham Abbey, to pass the night on his way from Grafton to London. Gardiner and Fox, then secretary and almoner to the king, lodged at the house of Mr. Cressy. They were acquainted with Cranmer, and the party met at the supper table of Mr. Cressy. The conversation turned on the one engrossing subject, at that time, the divorce of Katharine of Arragon. The subject had been discussed at the universities by the king's command, and Cranmer had been selected as one of the commission of the Council, but in his absence another delegate had been appointed to take his place. The business was not proceeding in accordance with the wishes of the king. In the course of the conversation Cranmer remarked that the question in debate appeared to him a very simple one, and that it ought to be determined by a reference to the Word of God. "Such a proceeding," he observed, "would settle the matter in the right way, and with the least delay and expense. It was a question for divines," he added, "and one that ought to be settled, not at Rome, but in England."

The opinion of Cranmer was reported by Fox, then the royal almoner, to the king. Henry was at that time in an exasperated state owing to the reply of the Papal court, which spoke only of delaying the settlement of the divorce. "Where is this Doctor Cranmer," said Henry, "I perceive he hath the right sow by the ear." Cranmer was immediately sent for. The quiet, modest student reluctantly obeyed the command of the imperious king.

In that conversation at the supper table of an obscure private gentleman, that great rule of faith and of interpretation was propounded which the Lord God has appointed as the only standard of authority to His church. It was then brought forward in its application to one case of ecclesiastical law of temporary interest; but the appeal to Holy Scripture, as the absolute rule in all questions of faith and morals was

the point at issue in the mind of Cranmer, and his future course from that evening, plainly denoted that he was the individual appointed of God to establish and to carry out the principle during his life, as a minister of Christ in this country, and to set his death as a seal of witness to it.

In the exercise of his duties at Cambridge, Cranmer had obtained the name of a Scripturist, for having been appointed to the lectureship of divinity in his own college, and to be the public examiner in theology to the university, he would not consent to grant his certificate to any student, examined by him, however superior he might be as to other acquirements, unless he displayed also a competent knowledge of the Bible. This regulation of Cranmer's, and his resolute adherence to it, stirred up at the time a spirit of deep and bitter animosity in many, who in after years expressed their heartfelt gratitude to him for their acquaintance with Holy Scripture, and for the just estimate they had been thus constrained to form of the theology of the schools.

The time however was arrived, when the Scripturist, whose sphere had been hitherto the comparatively narrow area of a university, was to come forth upon an extensive field of action, to combat error, and to fight the good fight of faith as the dauntless and successful champion of Divine truth, both in the councils of the king, and in the deliberations of the leading divines of the Church.

Much as we owe to other distinguished martyrs—to Ridley, Hooper, Latimer, Philpot, Bradford, Tayler, and others,—each of whom fulfilled with admirable wisdom the work of his special calling—still, Cranmer stands pre-eminent and alone. As Blunt has said, "he had fallen upon evil tongues in those days," and his memory has since been unjustly traduced by those who might have known him better, or who could not understand him. But on almost every point where he has been attacked, various circumstances have come to light which prove him to have been misrepresented and unjustly accused. Even Foxe was mistaken in the account he has given of the burning of Joan Bocher, and the affecting story which he has told of the reluctance of the youthful king to sign her death-warrant, till almost forced by Cranmer to do so.

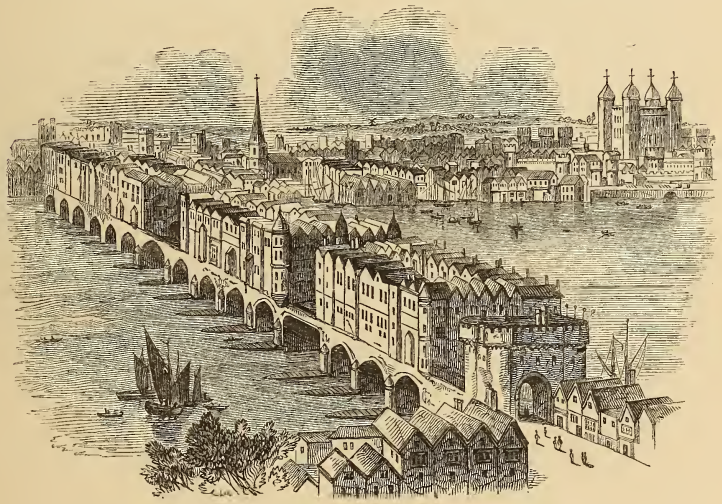
It has now been clearly proved that the honest martyrologist had been misled by a story which the enemies of Cranmer were only too glad to circulate. The warrant was not signed by the king, but by the Council, whose office it was to do so during the king's minority; Cranmer was not present in the Council when the sentence was passed upon the poor persecuted victim; and there is reason to believe that the primate had no share in her condemnation. "This passage in Cranmer's history," it has been well remarked, "has been pronounced incapable of defence; and truly it must have ever been so considered, had not recent researches released him from the imputation under which he has so long and so injuriously suffered."*

Cranmer was singularly qualified, in many respects, for the high position to which he was exalted: and the violent and guilty monarch, one of whose few redeeming qualities was his unshaken friendship for Cranmer, appears to have been among those who best understood and appreciated the character of this distinguished man. He seems to have been almost untainted by worldly ambition, or the poor desires of earthly advancement. When it was intimated to him, by the desire of his sovereign, that he was to be elevated to the primacy, he remained six months longer than it was necessary, on the continent, hoping that, during his absence, some other person might be appointed in his stead. On repeated occasions, the king himself expressed his astonishment at his guileless and unsuspicious nature, "What would they do with him," said Henry, when he first heard of Gostwick's attempt against the primate, "if I were gone?" The king is also said to have crossed out the three cranes from the armorial escutcheon of Cranmer, and to have put three pelicans in their stead, saying, as he did so: "that those birds should signify unto him that he must be ready as the pelican is, to shed her blood for her young ones; nurtured in the faith of Christ; for," he added, "your blood is likely to be tasted, if you stand thus firmly to your tackling in defence of your religion."

Let us take boat, as they would have said in Cranmer's days, my reader,

* See the writings of Roger Hutchinson, published by the Parker Society, Biographical Notice, pp. iv. v.

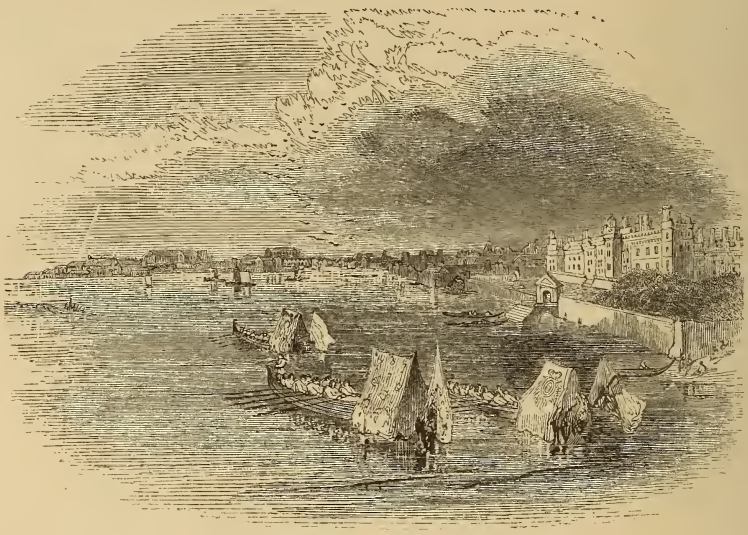
at the Tower stairs, and row down to Lambeth. Alas, among many improvements that London has witnessed in these modern times, this noble and beautiful river Thames, which, in days of old, was its fairest ornament, has now become little better than a wide and common sewer to the vast metropolis. London Bridge was then a little town of itself. The long and busy street of the Strand was a country road, and gained its name, no doubt, from being a strand open all along the river side from London city to the village of Charing—now Charing Cross—for Charing was still a village. Here and there along this open strand, was some stately building, probably



OLD LONDON BRIDGE.

a nobleman's castle or strong-hold, like Baynard's Castle. In the reign of Henry the Seventh, the castles seem to have become mansions, suited to more peaceful days, and many of those mansions were the palaces of the chief noblemen, and then, instead of the unsightly coal and timber wharfs, and the huge black barges moored close to the banks of the river, and the confused mass of irregular houses rising behind them, which now meet the eye, there were gardens and terraces, and flights of steps, and alleys of green trees. And the scent of flowers was borne on the breeze from shore

to shore as the gilded barge or the quaintly shaped boat of those days floated along the pure and gliding stream. There stood the Lord Arundel's far-famed palace, and there a little higher was Essex House, and there the stately mansions of Cecil, Russel, and Villiers, where now the narrow streets still bearing those noble names are the sole memorials of their sites. There was the proud and wide-spread palace of Somerset, the Protector,



OLD SOMERSET HOUSE.

not the building before us, but the old palace which was taken down at the close of the last century.

And now passing the Savoy, and the spot where Durham Place once stood, which is covered with the houses of the Adelphi, we see before us one fine palace of former days, Northumberland House, still standing in its grandeur. And there stood the vast and magnificent palace of Whitehall, covering in former days a wide extent of ground. The Banqueting House is now the only but stately memorial of the royal palace.

But our destination is the palace of the Archbishop at Lambeth, and

LAMBETH PALACE.

we will cross the river after we have cleared the arches of Westminster Bridge, and land before the old gateway of Lambeth Palace. How often has this broad stream been thus crossed, and re-crossed from Whitehall to Lambeth, in those days when the river might be called the populous highway of the metropolis, and the richly ornamented barge and not the elegant carriage was the conveyance of the monarch and his nobility. How often has the barge of Cranmer been moored at this spot, and conveyed the single-minded primate to the stairs of Whitehall Palace. Here it was that King Henry came on one occasion, memorable to Cranmer. The clear-sighted monarch had penetrated the designs of the crafty Gardiner in the papers laid before him, filled with the charges of perjured witnesses against Cranmer, and ordering his barge in the evening, he placed the papers in his sleeve, and proceeded forthwith to Lambeth. The primate came forth to meet him, and stood waiting on the steps by the water-side. "O my chaplain," cried the king, "now I know who is the greatest heretic in Kent." He then put the papers into Cranmer's hands, and bade him look into them. The good archbishop saw with astonishment, the names of his accusers, many of whom were under obligation to him, and had received kindness from his hands,—such were the men now banded together in a shameful conspiracy against their primate. Cranmer respectfully demanded that a commission should be appointed to look into the matter. "A commission there shall be," said the king, "but the Archbishop of Canterbury shall be the chief commissioner, with such colleagues as he himself shall be pleased to appoint." These false and perjured men had done the archbishop an ill turn, but they soon came with fair and fawning words to implore his pardon. He gave them but a mild rebuke, with a full forgiveness, and on this, and various other occasions, he won for himself that high testimony to his Christian spirit of forgiveness, which became a proverb, linked with his name, "Do my lord of Canterbury an ill turn, and you make him your friend for ever."

After the death of the Duke of Suffolk, the husband of the king's sister, that upright man who had been the staunch friend of Cranmer, and a hearty forwarder of Protestant principles, another plot was got up against the unsuspicious Cranmer by the Romish party, the Duke of Norfolk being

at the head of it. An accusation was formally brought before the king in Council, that the archbishop and his learned men had so infested the whole realm with their unsavoury doctrine, that three parts out of the four in the land were abominable heretics, and the petitioners, as they seriously pretended, out of pure regard for the safety of the king, besought that Cranmer might be forthwith committed to the Tower. The king seemed to hesitate, and he was instantly assured, that while the primate was left at large, no person would dare to come forward as his accuser, but that if he were once in prison "the tongues and consciences of men would be released from all restraint, and the royal councillors would be enabled to search out the truth." Henry, with his wonted sagacity, saw through the whole design, but determined to outwit the smooth and flattering complainants. He gave his full consent to all that was required, bidding them to summon the archbishop on the morrow, and then, if they should see fit, commit him straightway to the Tower.

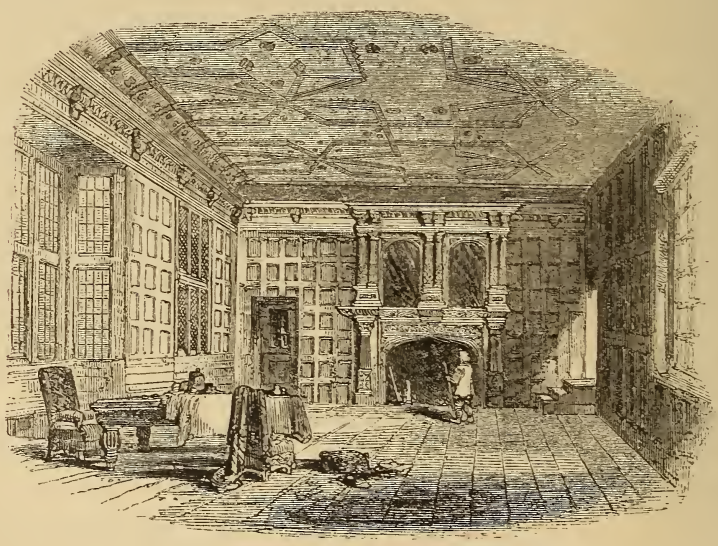
In the deep stillness of that same night, just before midnight, the measured dash of oars might have been heard sounding more and more distinctly, from the spot where we are now standing; and soon after a royal barge quietly approached the river stairs. A single figure might have been seen ascending the steps with noiseless foot-fall like a shadow stealing through the soft gloom. In another minute the gateway-bell of the palace tinkled faintly, and when the wicket-gate was cautiously opened, the light of the porter's lanthorn fell upon the muffled form and the well-known features of Sir Anthony Denny. The little door closed upon him as he quickly entered, and the darkness and quietness of the night was for a while unbroken; then the wicket-gate was again opened, and the light flashed for a moment on the two figures which came forth from the palace gateway, and walked straight to the river stairs. The king had sent for Cranmer at that dead hour of the night, and the archbishop had risen from his bed to obey the summons. He found Henry waiting to receive him in the gallery at Whitehall. The king told him plainly the charge brought against him by the Council, and added gravely, that he had given his consent to their demand. Cranmer, with his usual ingenuousness, mildly declared his perfect willingness to be committed to the Tower.

Kneeling before the king his master, "I am content," he said, "if it please your Grace, with all my heart to go thither at your Highness's commandment, and I most humbly thank your Majesty that I may come to my trial; for there be that have, in many ways, slandered me, and now, this way, I hope to prove myself not worthy of such report." On this the king, unable to suppress his amazement at the conscious uprightness of the simple-minded man, burst out,—"O what a man you must be, what simplicity is in you! I had thought that you would rather have sued me to take the pains to hear you and your accusers together for your trial, without any such durance! Do you know what state you are in with the whole world? and how many great enemies you have? Do you not consider what an easy thing it is to procure three or four false knaves to witness against you, who, if you were at liberty, would not dare to show their face. Think you to have better luck that way than Christ, your Master? No, not so, my lord of Canterbury. Go you to the Council to-morrow; and when you shall appear before them, demand that your accusers be brought to face you. And if they should proceed to commit you to the Tower, show them this ring,"—and the king put his own signet-ring into Cranmer's hands—"the sight of it will instantly bring the matter before me."

By eight o'clock on the morning of the following day, Cranmer was in the ante-room of the council-chamber. He had received his summons, and he had come at that early hour to meet it. There he was suffered to wait, and there the excellent Dr. Butts, the king's physician, found him, the first nobleman in the realm next to the royal family, waiting among the lacquies and serving men. He went straight to the king's chamber, and reported there the gross insult put upon the archbishop. "He had seen a strange sight," he said, "that morning." The king questioned him. "The primate of all England," replied Dr. Butts, "is become a serving man, and for the greater part of an hour has been standing among the fellows of that calling, at the door of the council-chamber." "Ha," said Henry, "is it so? they shall hear of this before long."

Cranmer was summoned to appear before the Council, and in answer to the charges brought against him, demanded that his accusers should come forward. He spoke in vain; and the order was given to commit him to

the Tower. But Cranmer now held forth to the view of the astonished assembly the signet-ring of his royal master. The proud and insolent party were panic-struck; and the Lord Russel exclaimed, with a mighty oath, "Said I not true, my lords, that the king would never endure that my Lord of Canterbury should be disgraced by imprisonment, for any cause less than arraignment for high treason." They were now, by power of the royal signet constrained to appear before the king's presence, and there



THE STAR CHAMBER.

the high-spirited monarch rated his "discreet Council" in severe and indignant terms for their insulting treatment towards the archbishop, keeping him at the door of their chamber like a serving man. "I would have your lordships to understand," said the king, "that the realm of England contains not a more faithful subject than I have ever found in my lord of Canterbury; and he that pretends attachment to me, must be ready to show respect and honour to him." The disconcerted courtiers were ready with their excuses and apologies. They protested earnestly that they had

meant no sort of injury against his Grace of Canterbury: they had, indeed, requested that he might be committed to the Tower, but their sole object was, that he might come forth from his confinement with augmented reputation and glory. "Is it even so?" said Henry. "Think ye then, that I discern not how the world goeth among you? Think ye that I see not the malice which sets you against him? I counsel you, let it be avoided out of hand, and never let my friends receive this usage again at your hand." Having said this, the king quitted the room. The gentle and forgiving Cranmer was as willing, with his wonted spirit of forgiveness, to accept their expressions of regret for their conduct towards him, as they were profuse in the offer of them.

I do not intend to enter into anything like a detailed narrative of the eventful and important history of Cranmer, in this paper, or even to give a sketch of his life,—that is of the regular and connected succession of its events,—I would but touch here and there upon some particular incident. The space I have allotted myself would not permit more. The exertions of Thomas Cranmer, have, under God, produced an influence upon the state of this country, with regard both to its political and its social character, yet to be told. He was undoubtedly and pre-eminently the man for the hour—the instrument selected and employed by the Divine Arbiter and Disposer of events, to bring forward and to execute His purposes of love and mercy to this long-benighted land. The very infirmities, and even the faults of Cranmer, have had their appointed use, in teaching us to withdraw our thoughts from the man in his weakness, and fix them in admiring adoration upon that glorious Being who hath said, "I am Jehovah, that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another: I will work, and who shall let it." In the reigns of Henry and Edward we see Cranmer in the extreme perils of honour and prosperity—deserving sometimes of high commendation, sometimes of blame—but still pursuing the same course, ever keeping full before him the one grand object of his life. In the reign of Mary we find him in the degradation and change of adversity, but he is still in the same path, still concentrating his every energy toward the same object of vital importance. At one time we behold him the distinguished friend and the unspoiled favourite of the

haughtiest monarch this realm of England ever saw—the only man whom Henry called for at his last most trying hour, and died, grasping the hand of his faithful servant. Then we find him the sponsor and the guardian of the most godly and gracious of our kings—the youthful Edward—but beset with even greater difficulties than in the preceding reign. Under the narrow-minded and superstitious Mary, Cranmer was an object of bitter hatred and unrelenting persecution: but however trying his situation may appear in the eyes of unthinking observers, his course was clearer, and the peril to his immortal soul—the one great consideration in his eyes—less imminent; and yet, in the trying hour, he fell. Was it to prove to him that the preparation that he had made for that dread season had had too much of self-dependence in it, far too little of holy watchfulness, and of entire dependence upon that strength which is made perfect in weakness? But when the lesson had been learned, under his Divine Teacher, then the disciple arose, Antæus-like, stronger from his fall, and the language of the last action of his devoted life was truly that of the Psalmist's words: "Rejoice not against me, O my enemy; when I fall, then shall I arise."

Probably the day of most unclouded happiness in Cranmer's life, was that on which he placed the crown upon the fair head of the youthful and ingenuous sovereign of whom, as we have said he was the appointed guardian, and to whom at his father's request, he had stood sponsor. It was on the 19th of February, 1547, that the young king rode in the midst of a magnificent procession from the Tower to his palace at Westminster: and on the day following, the Lord's day, he was crowned in the Abbey Church. There was no sermon composed for the occasion; but the loss of any formal composition of the kind was more than supplied by the simple and forcible address of the primate of England to his royal pupil and master, and more suited to the tender years of the charming boy, whose precocity of intellect, and whose still more extraordinary piety, would enable him to understand, and dispose him to appreciate, the profound and enlightened wisdom which breathed in the clear and pointed words of that address. Though short, and therefore the better suited for the occasion, it is too long to be inserted here. Cranmer com-

mences by admonishing the young king that the promise which he had made to renounce the devil and all his works, is not to be understood in the sense imposed upon it by the Bishop of Rome, as binding him to any dependence on his see. "Paul the Third," he adds, "wrote to your royal father, '*Didst thou not promise when crowned by our permission, to forsake the devil and all his works; and dost thou run to heresy? For the breach of this thy promise, knowest thou not, that it is in our power to dispose of thy sword and sceptre to whom we please?*" In the continuation of his address, he solemnly repudiates the intolerable assumptions of the Roman see. He reminds the king that, although the rites of coronation are but ceremonies, which do not affect his title to the throne, they are important ceremonies, because they admonish kings of their duty towards God. He concludes by saying, "Not therefore, as authorised by the Bishop of Rome, but as a messenger from my Saviour Jesus Christ, I shall now humbly remind your majesty of the duties which have devolved upon you. Your highness then, as God's vicegerent within your dominions, is bound to see that among those committed to your governance, God be truly worshipped, idolatry destroyed, images removed, and the tyranny of the Roman bishops overthrown. You are to reward virtue, to punish crime, to justify the innocent, to relieve the poor, to promote peace, to repress violence, and to execute justice throughout your realm." He then refers him to the word of God, for examples of those kings who obtained the blessings, or drew down the wrath of God upon them, and puts prominently forward the record given of one still younger than the youthful monarch he addresses, even that of Josiah. This is the last sentence of the address: "May the Almighty God of His mercy, cause the light of His countenance to shine upon you: may He grant you a happy and prosperous reign: may he defend and save you: and let all your subjects say, Amen."

That was indeed a morning of promise to the great leader of the Reformation, and to all his godly brethren throughout the realm; and there was then little reason to fear that clouds and darkness would overshadow its brightness. But alas, scarcely six years had passed away after the coronation of the youthful Edward, when Cranmer stood in all the

heaviness of blighted hope and heartfelt sorrow, beside the couch on which the child of his affection lay in the languor of a fatal disease. The measles and the small-pox coming in succession, had exhausted the vital energies of the noble youth, and left after their ravages, the seeds of pulmonary consumption. Yet even more deeply than by the sad prospect of his early death, was the heart of Cranmer tried by the last request of the dying king. Edward the Sixth had written with his own hand the draught of the document by which he had altered the order and right of succession, as set forth in the will of his father, and had appointed the Lady Jane Grey as his successor to the crown, in the place of the Lady Mary, his sister. The devise of the crown to this effect, had, after many objections, been made out by the Lord Chief Justice of England, and signed by all the members of the council, Papists as well as Protestants. Cranmer alone refused, as he said, to commit perjury and violate his oath to the late king. He therefore withheld his signature, "I cannot allow my conscience," he said, "to be guided by other men's acts." "He insisted and entreated, to be allowed a private interview with his beloved sovereign, —but he was insultingly charged before the council with daring to interpose himself between the king and his settled purpose. He went, however, to the dying prince, but was not permitted to be alone with him. It was a sore trial to Cranmer to resist the affectionate pleadings of one so tenderly loved and so highly valued. "I hope," said the dying king, "that you alone of all my council, will not stand out against my will. The judges have told me that I may lawfully bequeath my crown to the Lady Jane, and that my subjects may lawfully receive her as queen, notwithstanding the oath they took under my father's will."

Cranmer requested permission to consult with the judges, and having done so, he signed the devise of the king. But his conscience reproached him, and he acted against his own judgment. There can be little doubt but that the youthful monarch was, in some respects, the dupe of Northumberland, but we cannot agree with those historians who represent his altering the succession to the throne as being chiefly at the instigation of that ambitious and unprincipled man. It was rather his clear insight into the real character of the abominable system of Rome, and his

knowledge of the truth, in its only oracle, the word of God, acquired, as that knowledge only can be, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, which constrained the dying king to make every effort to secure to his people, as his successor, one who would acknowledge no other religion than that of the Bible; and who would regard the Protestant faith as the palladium of England. It might be truly said of him, that "from a child he had known the Holy Scriptures." "Ah, Master Cheke," said Cranmer, taking Sir John Cheke, who had been preceptor of his royal godchild, by the hand, "you may be glad all the days of your life, that you have such a scholar: he hath more divinity in his little finger, than we have in our whole bodies." His estimate and his love of Holy Scripture had been strikingly manifested at his coronation. Three swords of state were brought to be carried before him. "One is yet wanting," said Edward. His nobles enquired what he meant. He told them—"The Bible. That book," he said, "is the sword of the Spirit, and to be preferred before these swords. That ought in all right to govern us, who use them for the people's safety, by God's appointment. Without *that* sword we are nothing, we can do nothing, we have no power. From that we are what we are, this day. From that we receive, whatsoever it is that we at this present do assume. He that rules without it, is not to be called God's minister, or a king. Under that we ought to live, to fight, to govern the people, and to perform all our affairs. From that alone we obtain all power, virtue, grace, salvation, and whatsoever we have of divine strength." And having spoken these remarkable words, he commanded a Bible to be brought, and to be carried before him with the greatest reverence.

The last prayer of the dying king might truly be said to make the royal chamber the gate of heaven. "Lord God, deliver me out of this wretched life, and receive me among thy chosen; howbeit, not my will, but thine be done. Lord, I commit my spirit unto thee. O Lord, thou knowest how happy it were for me to be with Thee; yet for Thy chosen's sake send me health, that I may truly serve Thee. O my Lord God, bless Thy people, and save Thine inheritance. O Lord, save Thy chosen people of England. O my Lord God, defend this realm from papistry, and maintain Thy true religion, that I and my people may praise

Thy holy name, for Jesus Christ's sake." The energy of his own prayer aroused him, and his eyes, as he opened them, falling upon those who attended on him, he said, "Are ye so nigh? I thought ye had been farther off." He seemed somewhat distressed at first that his words had been overheard, but meekly added, smiling as he spoke, "I was only praying to God." Soon after, he exclaimed, "I am faint! Lord, have mercy upon me, and take my spirit!"

These were his last words. The prayer of the young and pious monarch was graciously answered, but not till the people of England had been brought to an understanding of the true character of Popery, under a more full and frightful development, than any they had before witnessed. It was yet to fall as a scourge throughout the length and breadth of England, and the inhabitants of the land were to learn a lesson which we trust they may never forget. During the reign of Mary, two hundred and eighty-eight individuals were burnt at the stake, among whom were the primate, four of the bishops, many of the most distinguished of the other clergy, some of the gentry, and a very large number of the poorer classes. We are aware that popish writers have opposed to this statement the number of those who suffered in the reign of Elizabeth; but it has been clearly proved that during her reign no individual suffered death on account of his religious opinions, but for political offences of the gravest and most treasonable character. Nor did this happen till after the Bishop of Rome had presumed and pretended to issue his bull of excommunication against the sovereign of this country, originated numberless plots against the queen's life, and let loose a host of Jesuits over every part of the land; so that to Rome may be traced back the crimes which were visited by the sword of justice in England. "Not one Romanist," says Mr. Stokes, in his volume entitled, *The Days of Queen Mary*, "suffered in Elizabeth's reign, excepting those who, by treasonable practices, rendered themselves offenders against the state, and were tried as such. This important truth is studiously concealed by the Romanists of the present day, who bring forward as their martyrs, men who will ever be chronicled by impartial historians, and from their own mouths, as traitors and convicted felons.

Lord Burleigh published a tract to prove that the Romanists, who suffered death in Elizabeth's reign, were punished for their political offences, to which severity the queen was driven by the pope's bull of excommunication against her. Bishop Bramhall gives the same testimony. We might cite other authorities, but the fact is generally acknowledged by unbiassed historians.

Perhaps there was scarcely any period in which the faith and the feelings of the reformers were more deeply tried, than at the death of their youthful Josiah, as the wise and godly Edward was called by them: all their hopes were suddenly crushed, and nothing remained, so far as their natural sight could discern, but a future of perplexing fears and coming evils. "The days and nights of anxiety, which they must have spent at this crisis, waiting for the policy of Mary to disclose itself, must be carried to the account of those silent sufferings which were more insupportable, perhaps, however less imposing, than the fire and the faggot."*

Cranmer was at Lambeth. There he remained at that trying time, and there he was joined by his valued friend Peter Martyr. The latter had received orders on the accession of Mary to suspend his lectures and to keep within the precincts of Oxford; but liberty was afterwards given him, and the first use he made of it was to hasten to the archbishop and to this hospitable mansion, where he had formerly been received, under very different circumstances; for then the primate in the modest dignity of his high rank and undisputed power, had made his ancient palace the home of many distinguished foreigners. He had invited them in their hour of distress to share its plentiful board, and dwell with him as brethren. Times were indeed altered. Cranmer had been summoned to appear before the council, treated with insolent severity, and ordered to confine himself to Lambeth. Not long after, he was again commanded to appear before the council, and to bring with him the inventory of his goods. Many of the devoted servants of Christ foreseeing the storm which was about to burst over their country, prepared to leave it; and Cranmer wrote to one of his friends, advising him to

* Blunt on the Reformation.

depart, adding, that no man should fear that his flight would bring discredit upon the Gospel, reminding him, that even our Lord did not hesitate to avoid the danger with which his life was threatened, till his hour was come: and that his apostles never rushed needlessly into danger. Some who loved him, gave him the same advice. He nobly replied: "Were I likely to be called in question for treason, robbery, or any other crime, I should be more likely to flee than I am at present. As it is, the post I hold, and the part I have taken, require me to make a stand for the truths of holy Scripture." He added, that he had resolved to lose his life, rather than desert his post.

He now prepared himself for the worst. Collecting, and paying his debts, and arranging his affairs, he so set his house in order, that not a single demand upon him remained unsatisfied: and having done this, he is said to have exclaimed: "Thank God, I am now my own man. I can now, with God's help, answer all the world, and face all adversities that may be laid upon me."

In the month of November 1553, he was attainted of high treason, and seems to have expected that his execution would soon follow. But, it was not until the March of the following year that Cranmer, with Ridley and Latimer, was removed to Oxford, where those disputations were held between them and their Romanist opposers, which were first followed by the martyrdom of the two other bishops.

On the 20th of April they were condemned and excommunicated as heretics, but eighteen months passed away before their execution took place; and a further interval elapsed before Cranmer was also led to the stake. The charge of high treason had been abandoned; it was supposed by many, because the queen, in her unrelenting enmity against Cranmer, was determined that he should suffer by the more painful death of burning, rather than by being beheaded, as he would have been, if convicted on the charge of high treason. He seems to have been more straitly confined and more inhumanly treated when at Oxford, than either of his two companions in suffering: for his prison was the loathsome Bocardo, the common gaol.

The account that is given of his degradation from his high office is

deeply affecting. He was arrayed in old canvas garments, made in mockery, after the fashion of his costly robes of office; and the vulgar and savage Bonner taunted him with brutal exultation on his changed appearance.

Cranmer was at this time in miserable poverty—being without even a penny to purchase food, on his return to prison, after the insulting ceremony of his degradation. A Gloucestershire gentleman, who had been much affected by the sight of his patient endurance, brought to him his gown, which had been taken from him. He had managed to get possession of it, and he walked by Cranmer's side on his return to prison, speaking kindly and respectfully to him, and he gave money to the bailiffs to purchase food for their prisoner. Had he offered it himself, he knew that he should be brought into peril for such a simple act of Christian humanity. As it was, he was summoned before Bonner and Thirlby that same day, and severely reprimanded, for having given relief to an excommunicated heretic.

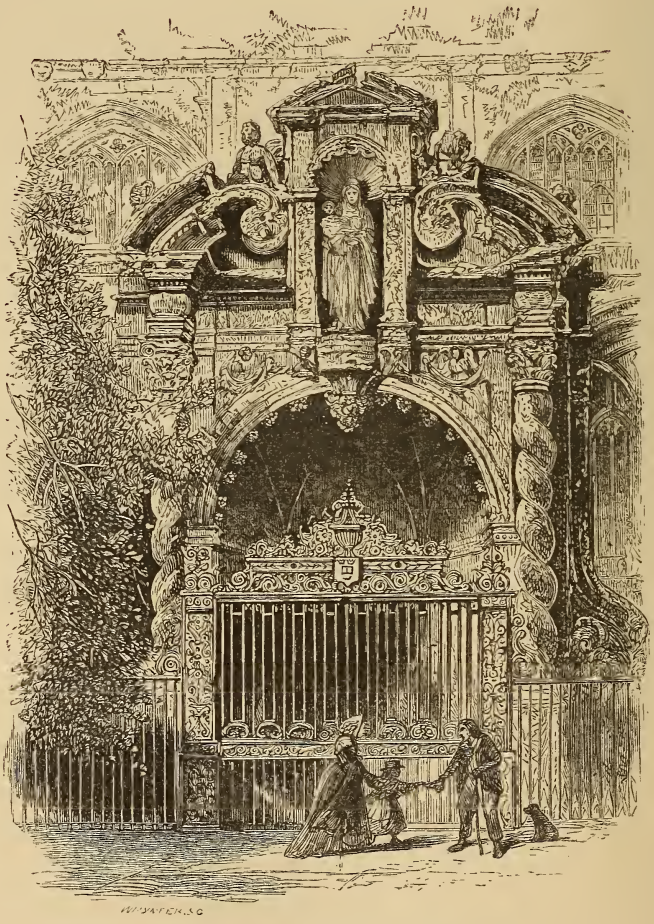
Immediately on his return to that gloomy and wretched prison, where he had passed so many weary days, his enemies changed their mode of treatment towards him. He was visited and condoled with by several of the highest personages in the university, and he was invited by the Dean of Christchurch to become his visitor. He was received with a courteous hospitality, entertained with kindness and respect, and many flattering words were spoken to him. A plan was in fact adopted, which seemed but too successful for a time. The Romanist party were determined to spare no pains, and leave untried no artifice, by which they might induce him to recant: and he, who had stood firm under their frowns and threatenings, was overcome by the apparent kindness, and the earnest persuasions of his pretended friends. He was at last induced to sign a recantation. I do not now enter upon a detail of the circumstances,* but there is little reason to doubt that a false account has been given of this sad proof of human frailty in one, who had been hitherto so faithful to the truth, and to his own enlightened conscience. No less than four of his recantations have been boasted of; but those who will read the remarks of Mr. Soames

* See *Note on Cranmer's recantations* at end of Chapter.

on the subject, and consider the evidence he has collected, will find that a very different view must be taken of the transaction from that which the Romanists have brought forward. Whatever really took place, however, one fact remains, that Cranmer fell, and denied the faith; that the love of this life, or the fear of the painful and ignominious death that awaited him, or the alluring promises that were held out to him, prevailed for a time. Probably he relaxed in watchfulness—was less earnest in prayer, "Sometimes," says Bishop Hall, "both grace and wit are asleep in the holiest and wariest breast." Like the man of God, when at Bethel, who had come thither resolved to brave the dangers which he was sent to meet, and who was never forsaken by God, while he was obedient to the command which had been given him, and refuse to eat bread, or drink water with the enemies of God; but who was overcome in his unguarded hour, and won over by the old and faithless prophet; so it was with Cranmer. He had stood firm and fearless when brutally attacked and shamefully ill-treated; but there were many old prophets at Oxford at that time, and they played too well the part of the grey-headed tempter at Bethel. "So he went back with them!"

"Whatever view others may take of thy fall, O David," said good Bishop Hall, "I can never look upon thee, at that sad hour, but through my tears."

Cruel indeed were the ways resorted to by those wicked men, in order to overcome the faith and stedfastness of Cranmer. He was one of those characters rarely met with, in whom it is difficult to awaken suspicion; who seem willing to take men on their own showing, thinking that no evil is intended where no evil appears. They knew also his weak points; for he was distinguished by a singular transparency of character, and seems to have had neither the art nor the wish to appear otherwise than what he was: and therefore those weak points were easily discerned. Bright hopes, sudden surprises, changes in his mode of treatment, specious promises, plausible reasonings, respectful and deferential courtesies, kindness, sympathy, with these Cranmer was plied to the disgrace of the party who were resolved at all hazards to entangle him in their toils. One sudden surprise still awaited him. But when it came, he was prepared to meet it.



GATEWAY OF ST. MARY'S, OXFORD.

The morning was dark and cheerless, and the rain fell heavily. Cranmer's time was come, and he was led forth from Bocardo to St. Mary's church. Clothed in coarse and squalid garments, and walking between two friars, the primate of all England passed through the streets on his way to that spot, where his two beloved friends, Ridley and Latimer, had been burnt as martyrs to the faith not many months before.

But first, probably according to the arrangement of that morning, to shelter his persecutors from the inclemency of the weather, the sermon was to be preached, and his expected recantation to be made in St. Mary's. Notwithstanding the meanness of his apparel, the mild gravity of that sorrowful countenance and the long white beard of the venerable archbishop, touched the hearts of the spectators with sincere commiseration, as he was led to a lofty platform which had been raised opposite the pulpit, that he might be seen by every one. There he knelt down and continued for a short time in silent prayer, while the tears fell fast from his eyes. Dr. Cole preached the sermon, and spoke of the prisoner as the chief leader in that heresy which had infected the religion of the whole country. But we cannot dwell on the sermon, and the false and cruel accusations it contained. During the whole time Cranmer stood, the very image of sorrow, the tears streaming down his venerable face: but he stood in meek and patient quietness, only at times he raised his eyes towards heaven, then, as if overcome by shame, fixed them on the ground. When the preacher called upon the congregation to pray for the prisoner, every one knelt down and prayed for him, even as they had all wept with him when they saw him weeping.

Cranmer knelt down with them and prayed in silence. When he rose up from his knees, after thanking the people for their prayers, he said, "I will now pray for myself, as I could best choose for my own comfort, and say the prayer word for word as I have written it."

Putting his hand into his bosom, he drew forth his prayer, and kneeling down, said: "O Father of heaven: O Son of God, Redeemer of the world: O Holy Ghost, three persons and one God, have mercy upon me, most wretched caitiff and miserable sinner. I have offended both against heaven and earth more than my tongue can express. Whither

then may I go, or whither should I fly? To heaven I may be ashamed to lift up mine eyes, and in earth I find no place of refuge or succour. To thee, therefore, O Lord, do I run; to thee do I humble myself, saying, O Lord, my God, my sins are great, but yet have mercy upon me for thy great mercy. The great mystery that God became man, was not wrought for little or few offences. Thou didst not give thy Son, O heavenly Father, unto death for small sins only, but for all the greatest sins of the world, so that the sinner return unto thee with his whole heart, as I do here at this present. Wherefore have mercy on me, O God, whose property is always to have mercy: have mercy on me, O Lord, for thy great mercy. I crave nothing, O Lord, for mine own merits, but for thy name sake, that it may be hallowed thereby, and for thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake; and now therefore, Our Father of heaven, hallowed be thy name," etc.

When this affecting prayer was ended, he knelt down again and repeated the Lord's prayer, all the people kneeling with him and uniting their voices with his. And now all listened in breathless attention to the address, which they had been anxiously waiting to hear, "Every man, good people," he began by saying, "at the time of his death, is desirous of giving some good exhortation, that others may remember it, after he is gone, and be the better thereby. So I beseech God to grant me grace, that I may speak something at this my departing, whereby God may be glorified and you edified:" for some time he continued to speak, but still the public recantation which the Romanists expected to hear from his lips had not been spoken. He had carefully and wisely reserved for the close of his address, the recantation—not of that pure scriptural faith, which he had so long held, and so long laboured to advance and to preach, but the full, plain and explicit renunciation of that recantation which he had written and signed, and he added, "Forasmuch as my hand offended in writing contrary to my heart, therefore my hand shall first be punished: for if I may come to the fire, it shall be first burned; and as for the pope, I refuse him as Christ's enemy, and antichrist, with all his false doctrine."

We may easily picture to ourselves the effect produced by these words, on that large and mixed assembly; the brief pause of mute astonish-

ment, the murmured expressions of satisfaction and thankfulness in some, and the loud and savage taunts and reproaches of those who were now utterly disconcerted and baffled. At the very climax of their success, as they thought, their triumph had suddenly received its death blow. In answer to the angry reproaches of Lord William of Thame, who, with, other persons of note, had attended, by order of the queen, to preside at the execution, Cranmer said, "Alas! my lord, I have been a man that all my life loved plainness, and never dissembled till now against the truth, which I am most sorry for, and I cannot better play the Christian man than by speaking the truth, as I now do. I say, therefore, that I believe concerning the sacrament, as I have taught in my book against the late Bishop of Winchester." The violent clamour of the Romish party was here outrageous, and Cranmer was hurried away to the spot where he was to die. As he went along he was assailed unceasingly by the bitter taunts and the insulting remonstrances of the Romish priests, especially of De Villa Garcia. But nothing could disturb or trouble him now. His agony of grief was at an end; calmly and even cheerfully he gazed around him, with looks of kindness on his mild expressive countenance; calmly, and with unshrinking fortitude, he endured the dreadful flames. True to his word, he held forth his right hand over the raging fire; there he steadily kept it, except when once for a moment he raised it to wipe his face. His left hand was constantly pointed upwards, and his eyes raised towards heaven, while he cried, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," At times, indeed, he fixed them on his burning right hand, exclaiming, "O this unworthy hand!" Thus he stood motionless, enabled, doubtless by Divine strength, to master the strong agonies of bodily pain, and to possess that wonderful power of self-command which he manifested to the end. The fire burnt rapidly and furiously, and his happy spirit was soon set free from its mortal prison-house. His heart was found afterwards among the ashes, unconsumed.

The very next day after the burning of Cranmer, Cardinal Pole was appointed Archbishop of Canterbury, and that same night these words were written upon the gates of Lambeth Palace: "Hast thou killed, and also taken possession?"

Burnet's summary of Cranmer's character may with advantage be

quoted here. "Thomas Cranmer," says he, "was a man raised of God for great services, and well fitted for them. He was naturally of a mild and gentle temper, not soon heated, nor apt to give his opinion rashly of things or persons, and yet this gentleness, though it oft exposed him to his enemies, who took advantages from it to use him ill, knowing he would readily forgive them, did not lead him into such a weakness of spirit as to consent to every thing that was uppermost: for as he stood firmly against the Six Articles in King Henry's time, notwithstanding all his heat for them; so he also opposed the Duke of Somerset in the matter of the sale and alienation of the chantry lands, and the Duke of Northumberland during his whole government: and now resisted unto blood: so that his meekness was really a virtue in him, and not a pusillanimity in his temper. He was a man of great candour: he never dissembled his opinion, nor disowned his friend; two rare qualities in that age, in which there was a continued course of dissimulation, almost in the whole English clergy and nation, they going backward and forward, as the court turned. But this had got him that esteem with King Henry, that it always preserved him in his days. He knew, what complaints soever were brought against him, he would freely tell him the truth; so, instead of asking it from other hands, he began at himself. He laid out all his wealth on the poor, and in pious uses. He had hospitals and surgeons in his house for the king's seamen; he gave pensions to many of those that fled out of Germany into England; and kept up that which is hospitality indeed, at his table, where great numbers of the honest and poor neighbours were always invited. He was so humble and affable, that he carried himself in all conditions at the same rate. He had been the chief advancer of the Reformation in his life, and at last sealed it with his blood. Those who compared modern and ancient times found in him so many and excellent qualities, that they did not doubt to compare him to the greatest of the primitive bishops. It seemed necessary that the reformation in this Church, which was indeed nothing else but restoring of the primitive and apostolical doctrine, should have been chiefly carried on by a man so eminent in all primitive and apostolical virtues."

NOTE ON CRANMER'S RECANTATIONS.

In addition to the recantation given by Fox, six others were signed by, or attributed to, Cranmer; they are printed by Strype in his Memorials, from Bonner's publication. These documents have of late been examined with considerable attention, particularly by the Rev. H. Soames, who, after stating the seductive arts employed by the papists to allure Cranmer from the faith, observes, "Precisely to what extent his weakness reached, is a point involved in much obscurity. Both parties being disappointed, the particulars of his fall have not been detailed by his contemporaries of either party, with that fulness, clearness, and consistency which is desirable in a matter of such importance." Mr. Soames then examines the subject with great care. The result appears to be, that two of these papers, scarcely capable of receiving a Romish colouring, were written by Cranmer before his degradation and final sentence. The first was merely this, "Forasmuch as the king and queen's majesties, by consent of their parliament, have received the pope's authority within this realm; I am content to submit myself to their laws therein, and to take the pope for the chief head of this church of England, so far as God's laws, and the laws and customs of this realm will permit. THOMAS CRANMER." The latter clause reduces this paper to be nothing in effect; however, it was disingenuous, and when Cranmer had once entered upon this course, though we are told that he wished to retract, he found himself too far entangled. The paper was sent up to court, and considered unsatisfactory, a second less equivocal but still somewhat evasive was prepared. The third expressed submission to the royal ordinances in more unqualified terms; we are told that it was shown to Bonner and Thirlby during their stay at Oxford, but being also considered insufficient, a fourth was drawn up by Bonner. This might pass for a recantation among uninformed persons, but it is merely a declaration of Cranmer's readiness to be guided by "the Catholic Church," in his religious belief, without giving any sanction to the innovations of the Church of Rome. The fourth paper appears to have the most satisfactory marks of being genuine of any of the set; it is dated February 16, 1555; the three former are without date. Several circumstances render it probable, that the first three papers had been objected to by the archbishop, and that Bonner worded the fourth in an artful manner, so that it would deceive ignorant persons, while its contents would not be likely to be rejected by Cranmer.

On the 24th of February, a writ was issued, directing the civil authorities of Oxford to burn Cranmer as a heretic. This intelligence must have affected the archbishop considerably, and while in that state of mind, the paper printed by Foxe was probably prepared by the friars and others who beset him. It is an unequivocal assent to popery—but he does not appear to have subscribed it; his name was added by others, and his assent witnessed, not by any persons of rank or note, though many must have been at hand, but by a Spanish friar, and by Sydall, an obscure, bigoted, private member of the university. This was printed immediately, but directly after (on March 13th) it was suppressed by order of the council. Probably not having been formally signed by Cranmer, the papists might apprehend that if it were circulated, it would be disavowed, and perhaps destroy their expectation of at last drawing him into a full renunciation of his principles. Without declaring his assent, he perhaps might have copied it, and have said he would give the contents full consideration. The sixth and last paper bears strong evidence of being drawn up by Cardinal Pole;—it is rather a lengthy self-accusation, than a renunciation of doctrinal opinions, and the absence of statements of that nature, is a strong evidence that all attempts to induce Cranmer to assent implicitly to the Romish faith, had failed. Another trial was made, and from the narrative of his last hours, we find that on the morning of his execution, the Spanish friar brought a seventh paper to Cranmer, who, still hoping for life, seemingly assented, and transcribed two copies, but instead of stating his assent, openly declared the contrary.

All these papers were published immediately after Cranmer had been burned, under the title of "All the submissions and recantations of Thomas Cranmer," and with the authorization of Bonner—a confirmation more likely to induce suspicion than to remove it. He did not hesitate to print the seventh paper, as if it had been read and assented to by Cranmer in St. Mary's church, though in fact he had refused to do so, and had made the impressive declaration and prayer already given.

To the glory of God,

AND IN GRATEFUL COMMEMORATION OF HIS SERVANTS,

THOMAS CRANMER,

NICHOLAS RIDLEY,

HUGH LATIMER,

PRELATES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

WHO NEAR THIS SPOT,

YIELDED THEIR BODIES TO BE BURNED,

BEARING WITNESS TO

THE SACRED TRUTHS WHICH THEY HAD

AFFIRMED AND MAINTAINED AGAINST THE

ERRORS OF THE CHURCH OF ROME,

AND REJOICING THAT

TO THEM IT WAS GIVEN, NOT ONLY TO BELIEVE IN CHRIST,

BUT ALSO TO SUFFER FOR HIS SAKE,

THIS MONUMENT

WAS ERECTED BY PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION,

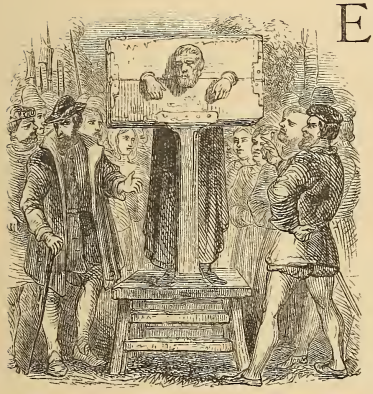
IN THE YEAR OF THE LORD GOD,

MDCCCXLI.

INSCRIPTION ON MARTYRS' MEMORIAL, OXFORD.

THE MARTYRS' MEMORIAL, OXFORD.

ESSEX AND SUFFOLK.



ESSEX, Suffolk, and Norfolk were distinguished for a noble band of martyrs in the dark days of Mary. Bilney, and Rose, and Samuel, seem to have gone everywhere preaching with the same faithful and loving boldness, in which Rowland Tayler fulfilled his ministry at Hadleigh. Our road will now take us to several places hallowed by the good confession and the fiery trial of many of whom the world was not worthy.

The suburban village of Stratford-le-Bow, was made the scene of one of the most atrocious murders by which the faithful witnesses to the truth suffered. Eleven men, and two women, were led to that village to be burnt alive. They had been separated into two parties; and the one little company was told by the sheriff, that the other had recanted. This lying device of the tempter met with a signal defeat. The treacherous sheriff received the same answer from all the prisoners; they told him that their faith was not built upon man, but upon Christ crucified. An immense pile was prepared for their burning; the men were chained together to three stakes, and the two women stood quietly in the midst of the faggots. They all prayed together, and thanked God that not one was missing from that blessed company. There the bodies of these thirteen

martyrs were burnt to ashes. In Essex alone, there were forty-four martyrs.

Brentwood, which we next reach, was hallowed by the martyrdom of William Hunter, a mere youth of nineteen, of lowly parentage, but of a truly brave and noble spirit. His chief offence, and that which led to his death, was one which would scarcely be credited in these days, in England, though similar instances in popish countries are frequently occurring. He was found by a priest named Attwell, reading the Bible aloud, as it lay on the desk of the old church or chapel at Brentwood—a book but rarely, if ever, to be found in a Roman Catholic place of worship. He was rebuked for meddling with a book which he could not understand; and the priest told him, it was never a merry world since the Bible had come abroad in English. A conversation followed, in which the priest charged him with being a heretic, and assured him that if he did not turn over a new leaf, he should broil for it. Attwell becoming enraged, brought the vicar from a neighbouring ale-house, who also attacked the unoffending youth. "Sirrah!" he said, "Who gave thee leave to read the Bible, and to expound it?" William Hunter replied, that he only read the Scriptures for his comfort, and did not expound them. One Justice Brown, as unjust a man as the priest and the vicar, sent off the poor youth to Bonner; and he was brought back to be burnt at this place. He was the child of godly parents; his father and his mother, instead of persuading him to recant, endeavoured to strengthen and encourage him in his trial; his brother stood by his side to the last, and in consequence of his devoted affection, narrowly escaped the same death. "Good people, pray for me," said the martyr to those around; "and make speed and despatch me quickly; pray for me while you see me live, and I will pray for you likewise." "Pray for thee!" cried Justice Brown, "I will no more pray for thee, than I will pray for a dog." "You have now that which you sought for," said the youthful saint, calmly addressing his savage persecutor, "and I pray God, it be not laid to your charge, at the last day. Howbeit, I forgive you." "I ask no forgiveness of thee," cried the other; but William answered, "If God forgive you, I shall not require my blood at your hands." The clouds had hung darkly over the sky, casting a gloom over the sad

spectacle. But as the faithful martyr looked up and prayed, "Son of God, shine upon me;" the clouds at once separated, and a flood of sunshine burst full upon his upraised face, so that he was obliged to turn it away from the dazzling brightness. When the faggots were lighted, he put his psalter into the hands of his brother. "Think on the holy sufferings of Christ," said his brother Robert, "and be not afraid." "I am not afraid," he replied. Then lifting up his hands to heaven, he cried out: "Lord, Lord, Lord, receive my spirit." He bent his head over the thick smoke, which suffocated him, and his freed and blessed spirit passed away from all sorrow and suffering for ever.

MARTYRS' TREE, BRENTWOOD.

The ancient town of Colchester won for itself an honourable distinction in the reign of Mary, for here no fewer than twenty-three martyrs suffered for their Scriptural faith, and devoted constancy. The people of Colchester, like the men of Suffolk, had been true and loyal subjects to their queen. While she lay at Framlingham Castle, they had sent a deputation to wait upon the Lady Mary with assurances of their attachment to her cause, and a plentiful supply of provisions; and

they put their town in a state of defence to be prepared to meet an attack from the rival party. But the loyalty of the Colchester people was no safeguard to them, during the dreadful persecutions which disgraced her reign. Here it was that John Lawrence suffered martyrdom,

PROCESSION THROUGH COLCHESTER.—*(From an old Engraving.)*

before the Mote Hall. He had been a Romish priest, and had suffered such cruel usage while in prison for the truth, that he was placed in a chair at the stake, being unable to stand. "We must not forget," says Fuller, "how little children, being about the fire, cried unto him, 'God strengthen you, God strengthen you, good Master Lawrence;' which

was beheld as a product of His providence, who out of the mouth of babes and sucklings ordained strength, as also it evidenced their pious education."

Rose Allen is mentioned by Fuller as another of the most remarkable of the Essex martyrs. She, with her father and mother, and one John Johnson, were burned together in the court of Colchester Castle. This poor girl was seized by Justice Tyrrell, on her way to fetch beer for her bed-ridden mother, after he and his constables having surrounded the house, had entered the chamber of her parents, and ordered them to rise and prepare to go to prison. The cruel magistrate took a lighted candle from the girl, and held the back of her hand in the flame till the sinews cracked, abusing her all the while in coarse terms because she did not cry out. Notwithstanding her suffering, she afterward took up the drink to her sick mother, and she said to a friend, "I had a pitcher in my other hand, and might have laid him on the face with it, if I would, for no one held me. But I thank God with all my heart, that I did it not." When asked by another how she could bear the pain, she replied, "At first it was some grief to me, but the longer it burned, the less I felt." Fuller compares her to the Roman Scevola, when he burned his hand before Porsenna; but this rude poor girl, of low but godly parentage, showed a nobler courage than that celebrated hero of old Rome.

The pleasant valleys on the borders of Essex and Suffolk had been long the resort of many of Wycliffe's followers. They had settled at Colchester, St. Osyth's, and Boxtead, and bore the name of "the known men;" and had preached throughout that country. Afterwards came Bilney to Hadleigh and to Ipswich. Thomas Rose came at the same time to Hadleigh, brought thither, it appears, by Master Fabian, the pastor of Polstead. The life of Rose was one succession of stirring adventures, as, persecuted at one place, he fled to another. Hadleigh was, for a time, the sphere of his stated ministry. There, probably under the preaching of Bilney, his own views of Divine truth became clear and established, and there he proclaimed them faithfully and earnestly to others. He preached with so much power that his hearers continued

to increase, and came from a distance to hear him; and his labours were blessed of God to so many, who openly embraced the truth, that the celebrated John Bale, then a Romish priest, and afterwards a most zealous Protestant, was sent by the Romanists to preach against him, but without success, for the truth prevailed.

Rose was not only an enlightened advocate of the truth, but an unsparing opposer of error. With great boldness he exposed and attacked the impious frauds of images, and the idolatry of image-worship. The effect of his preaching was soon apparent in the conduct of four of his hearers.

There was at that time a famous rood or crucifix, to which crowds of pilgrims resorted, in the little church of Dovercourt, a village close to Harwich, through which the highroad still passes. Four men, named King, Debnam, March, and Gardner, who resided at Dedham and at Bergholt, set out on foot one clear frosty night for Dovercourt, having agreed to destroy the idolatrous image. They succeeded in their enterprise, and entering the church, took away the rood. At a short distance from the place, they kindled a fire, burnt the image, and were lighted for more than a mile on their homeward path by the blaze of the burning rood. So daring an act gave great offence to the Romanists. The offending parties were discovered. Three of them were taken, and condemned to die; the fourth, Gardner, escaped. Rose was strongly suspected of having prompted or encouraged the burning of the rood, and the three men were offered their lives, if they would acknowledge that Rose had been their accomplice. But they refused to do so, and bravely suffered the heavy penalty with which their offence was visited, being hanged in chains. Their conduct has been censured; but though not acting, like Gideon, under the express command of God, they were filled with zeal for His glory, and jealous for the pure worship of their blessed Saviour.

Here I must pause. I have brought before you, my reader, many a record of heavy suffering and endurance, in the fight of faith to which some of the holiest and wisest men in this country were exposed at the period of the Reformation; but there is one sad story which it appears to me ought

to follow the foregoing pages. The lesson which it teaches is one which may be profitable as a warning to us. It is one of the most remarkable illustrations of the inspired maxim, that "the fear of man bringeth a snare," and that "he who saveth his life shall lose it."

Among the distinguished promoters of the Reformation was Sir John Cheke. He was one of the most accomplished scholars, and one of the most godly men of those days. He had been the preceptor of the youthful King Edward, and the effect of his early training was evident in the piety and the wisdom of his royal pupil. He had accepted the office of Secretary of State under the short reign of the Lady Jane Grey. When Mary came to the throne, Sir John Cheke was committed to the Tower as a traitor. There he remained till the year following, when a pardon was granted to him, and he was released from prison. Having obtained a license from the queen to travel, he left England. After visiting Italy, he settled in Strasburgh, where the English service was performed, and where many learned Protestants were then residing. Like many other men in those days, Sir John Cheke was a believer in astrology, and being earnestly invited by two of his former acquaintances, the Lord Paget and Sir John Mason, to come to them at Brussels, he consulted with his art, and learning from it that he might accept their invitation without personal risk, he set off to join them. To quote Fuller; "he is said to have consulted the stars (would he had not gone so high, or else gone higher for his advice.) In his return from Brussels to Antwerp—no whit secured by his own innocence, nor by the promise of the Lord Paget, nor by the pledging of Sir John Mason for his public protection, nor by the intercession of his friend Feckenham (Abbot of Westminster) to Queen Mary, he (with Sir Peter Carew) was beaten from his horse, tied hand and foot to the bottom of a cart, thence conveyed hoodwinked to the next haven, and so shipped over under hatches unto the Tower of London. Here all arts were used on him, which might prevail to drive or draw an easy soul, surprised on a sudden, to make him renounce his religion; until hard usage in prison, joined with threatenings of worse, and fair promises on his submission, drew from his mouth an ab-renunciation

of that truth which he so long had professed and still believed; and he thereupon was restored to his liberty, but never to his contentment.

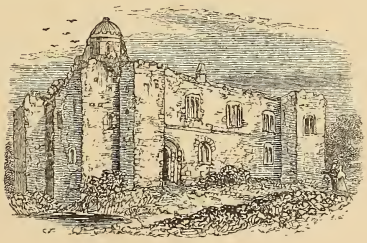
"For such is the tyranny of Papists, that they are not satisfied to take men's consciences captive by their cruelty, except also they carry them about in public triumph. Thus Bonner got Sir John Cheke unawares to sit in the place where godly martyrs were condemned; and although he did nothing but sit still, sigh, and be silent, yet, shame for what he had done, sense of what others suffered, and sorrow that his presence should be abused to countenance cruelty, brought him quickly to a comfortable end of a miserable life, as carrying God's pardon and all good men's pity along with him."

He was made to suffer, to a grievous extent, the effects of his disgraceful fall. It was at the trials of the Essex martyrs that Bonner, with this fiendlike ingenuity of cruelty compelled him to sit by his side on the bench, and to see and hear all the proceedings in his iniquitous court. There this poor faithless disciple saw in many a lowly and uneducated follower of Christ, that calm, unshrinking firmness in which he himself had been found so miserably wanting. There he heard from the lips of rude, unlettered men, and feeble women, that bold confession of faith which he had himself been afraid to make. There, in fact, worse tortures than those of the rack and the stake, were prepared for his spirit; there the iron entered into his soul: and a fire only less terrible than that which is not quenched, consumed his vital energies; till at last, heart-stricken, and heart-broken, he pined away, and sunk into a premature grave. He was no more than forty-three when he died. Had he lived longer, he might, and perhaps would have acted as Cranmer did, and finished his course by a fearless and glorious confession, at the stake. As it was, he was evidently chastened of God, that he might not be condemned with the world. The tears of good men, as we have seen, watered his grave, and thoughts rather of compassion than of censure rested upon his memory. Still, his fall stands forth as a beacon, and a warning to all professing Christians, calling us to self-distrust, to watchfulness and prayer; bidding us to count the cost, before we take up our cross to follow Christ; and after having taken it up, to depend, not on our own

resources, not on our own strength, but to be ever seeking more grace, and renewed supplies of that Divine strength, which is not only made perfect in weakness, but which is never withheld from those who humbly and diligently seek it: "for He hath said: I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say: The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

The end of that wicked man, who was the chief tormentor of the hapless Sir John Cheke, presents a striking contrast to that of his miserable victim. After the death of Mary, Bonner, whose brazen-faced audacity seems never to have quitted him, presented himself among the bishops before the queen. The clear-sighted Elizabeth turned from him with disgust; and he found that his day of power was gone for ever. He was sent to the Marshalsea, though with little or no restriction placed upon his liberty. But he was so abhorred and execrated by his fellow-citizens, that he was seldom or ever known to venture beyond the precincts of the gardens and fields attached to the prison. So that his place of confinement was, in fact, his only place of protection.

Bonner was buried in the churchyard of St. George's, Southwark, which is within a hundred yards of the old Marshalsea. I went to seek for his grave, but was told by the sexton that the spot was no longer to be found. "We know that he was buried here," was the reply I received to my inquiry; "but hundreds of coffins are piled over the place, which is now somewhere under the church."



COLCHESTER CASTLE.

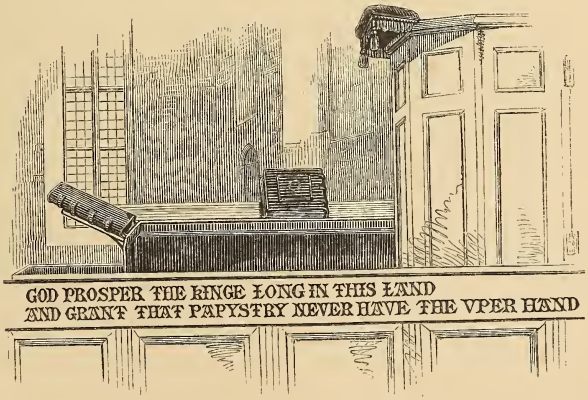
"LET these things never be forgotten —let your children remember them for ever." Such were the words of the learned and godly Jewel, in his view of the famous or rather infamous bull which Pius the Fifth dared to send to this country, to excommunicate Queen Elizabeth. He concludes by saying, "God has given us His word. We have by it, espied wherein they (the Romanists) have robbed us. Let us be no more deceived. And Thou, O most merciful Father, be our defence in these dangerous times. The lion rangeth, and seeketh whom he may devour. Look down from thy heavens upon us. Give Thy grace unto Elizabeth Thy servant." And with a beautiful and affecting prayer for his royal mistress, he concludes. Much of this language of Jewel is applicable to the present state of the country: for Rome now is what Rome was three hundred years ago. Well might Jewel say, "Let these things never be forgotten. Let your children remember them for ever." It is for this reason that I have called upon you, my readers, to go with me on pilgrimage to some of those places where our forefathers lived, and died, as preachers and martyrs, faithful to the truth. It is however not merely nor chiefly because Rome is a persecuting church, that we protest against her, but because she has corrupted the truth, denied the faith, and perverted the doctrine of the Church of Christ.

It has not been to harrow up the feelings of the reader that this record of persecution and suffering is published; it has not been to provoke a spirit of hostility against the members of the Church of Rome, that it has been shown what Rome has been, when power was given

to her for a season in this now free and enlightened country. It was in order to set forth the character and the conduct of those great men, who were enabled by the grace of God to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and who, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, took unto themselves the whole armour of God, and were thus able to withstand in the evil day. It is written that "the righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance," and it is surely in accordance with these living words that I have called upon you to accompany me to many a spot, where witnesses for the truth, in those dark days of superstition and persecution, boldly stood forth to preach the pure word of God, and to seal their testimony with their own blood.

There our fathers lived and preached, "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." There, they were faithful unto death, and thence, their brave, meek spirits went up to receive a crown of life.

"Those suns are set. Oh rise some other such!
Or all that we have left is empty talk
Of old achievements and despair of new."



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